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# The Problems of Adolescence and Youth

BY PAUL E. KREITZMANN

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# THE PROBLEMS OF ADOLESCENCE *and* YOUTH

And Their Treatment  
in Educational and Pastoral Work

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A frank discussion from the standpoint of  
the religious educator, for the use of  
parents, ministers, and lead-  
ers in young people's  
work in general

BY  
**Prof. Paul E. Kretzmann, Ph.D., D.D**

BURLINGTON, IOWA  
LUTHERAN LITERARY BOARD  
1925

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## INTRODUCTION

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DOCTOR MARTIN LUTHER, in his exposition of the Fourth Commandment, writes: "In addition, it would be well to preach to the parents also, and such as bear their office, as to how they should deport themselves toward those who are committed to them for their government. For although this is not expressed in the Ten Commandments, it is nevertheless abundantly enjoined in many places in the Scriptures. And God desires to have it embraced in this commandment when he speaks of father and mother. For He does not wish to have in this office and government knaves and tyrants; nor does He assign to them this honor, that is, power and authority to govern, that they should have themselves worshiped; but they should consider that they are under obligations of obedience to God; and that, first of all, they should earnestly and faithfully discharge their office, not only to support and provide for the bodily necessities of their children, servants, subjects, etc., but, most of all, to train them to the honor and praise of God. Therefore do not think that is left to your pleasure and arbitrary will, but that it is a strict command and injunction of God, to whom also you must give account for it.

"But here again the sad plight arises that no one perceives or heeds this, and all live on as though God gave us children for our pleasure or amusement, and servants that we should employ them like a cow or

ass, only for work, or as though we were only to gratify our wantonness with our subjects, ignoring them, as though it were no concern of ours what they learn or how they live; and no one is willing to see that this is the command of the Supreme Majesty, who will most strictly call us to account and punish us for it; nor that there is so great need to be so seriously concerned about the young. For if we wish to have excellent and apt persons both for civil and ecclesiastical government, we must spare no diligence, time, or cost in teaching and educating our children, that they may serve God and the world, and we must not think only how we may amass money and possessions for them. For God can indeed without us support and make them rich, as He daily does. But for this purpose He has given us children, and issued this command that we should train and govern them according to His will, else He would have no need of father and mother. Let every one know, therefore, that it is his duty, on peril of losing the divine favor, to bring up his children above all things in the fear and knowledge of God, and if they are talented, have them learn and study something, that they may be employed for whatever need there is (to have them instructed and trained in a liberal education, that men may be able to have their aid in government and in whatever is necessary).

“If that were done, God would also richly bless us and give us grace to train men by whom land and people might be improved, and likewise well-educated citizens, chaste and domestic wives, who afterwards would rear godly children and servants. Here consider now what deadly injury you are doing if you be negligent and fail on your part to bring up your child to usefulness and piety, and how to bring upon

yourself all sin and wrath, thus earning hell by your own children, even though you be otherwise pious and holy. And because this is disregarded, God so fearfully punishes the world that there is no discipline, government, or peace, of which we all complain, but do not see that it is our fault; for as we train them, we have spoiled and disobedient children and subjects. Let this be sufficient exhortation; for to draw this out of length belongs to another time." (*Concordia Triglotta*, 629. 631.)



# THE PROBLEMS OF ADOLESCENCE AND YOUTH

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## CHAPTER I

### PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

THE correlate of rights are duties, of privileges, obligations. This is a principle whose correctness is readily conceded in theory, but very often ignored in practise, particularly by persons occupying positions of authority and power by virtue of the provisions of the Fourth Commandment or by reason of unusual executive ability in various democratic organizations. It requires but little searching in the records of the past and of the present to find instances in which governments, no matter in what form, abused their powers for the exploitation of their subjects and for their own aggrandizement, no matter how cleverly disguised. We find this fault in the case of the leaders of Greece as well as in that of the monarchs of Rome; we have evidence of its presence in the midst of savagery and barbarism as well as in the highly enlightened nations.

Nor is this fault confined to men (and women) holding positions of authority in the State, in public office. On the contrary, indications point to the fact that persons vested with authority in the church, in the school, and in the home, whether by divine right

or by human selection, are just as prone to become transgressors in this respect. There is far too much demanding of blind obedience and insisting upon recognition of authority, especially during the critical age of adolescence, without a corresponding attempt to understand the problems confronting youth in all its stages, without a sympathetic interest in the questions which are agitating the minds of the boys and girls just emerging from childhood or just growing into manhood and womanhood, without the proper tactful assistance in solving the difficulties which are to them as momentous as any riddle of the ages. The favorite method of procedure of parents and educators during this critical and dangerous period seems to be that of procrastinating what they term unpleasant disclosures, no matter what special interests of the adolescents are involved, or to educate the young people in their care by reprimands and by prohibitions. The manner of dealing with the situation often savored of that of a watch-maker who, instead of examining a watch submitted to him would first talk to it and shake it, and eventually perhaps throw it against a wall.

But this manner of dealing with the problems of young people is shirking a responsibility which cannot be shaken off by a mere shrug of the shoulders. We have no right to evade our duties by a parrotlike repetition of equivocal phrases, by reprimands and by the spouting of maxims which ignore the real difficulty. It is rather for all educators, whether parents or pastors or teachers, and even for such as are vested with authority by consent and selection of those governed, to remember that the attitude required of them by God is very plainly indicated in Holy Writ. The emphasis upon the bringing up of the children in the

nurture and admonition of the Lord is increased by the introductory admonition: "Provoke not your children to wrath," Eph. 6, 4, or, as the Apostle writes in another place: "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged," Col. 3, 21. What the Apostle undoubtedly has in mind is not only the unreasonable, cruel severity which defeats its own ends by the application of brute force in the exaction of obedience and the enforcement of commands, but also the attempted stultifying of the mentality of children by a discouraging aloofness with regard to the interests of the boys and girls whose entrance upon the first stage of youth has opened before them vistas of unlimited possibilities. For in either case the provoking, the irritating is done by unjust, capricious, unreasoning and unreasonable treatment, whether intentional or not, and the result is a broken spirit, as Bengel remarks. At no time during the entire life of the children while they are under the care of parents, teachers, and pastors are the latter so much in need of the tactful wisdom which God alone can bestow as during the adolescent period of the children. This wisdom, however, is not the result of arbitrary guess-work, but presupposes rather a careful study of the situation, a knowledge of the various factors which come into consideration, and a sane application of the fundamental rules of Christian pedagogy to every individual case.

We find, of course, that the importance of the subject which is herewith broached is quite generally conceded in educational and ministerial circles. The parents are naturally interested, if they are at all aware of the responsibilities resting upon them. The pastor, by virtue of his office, has charge and is speci-

fically given charge of the young people in the congregation or on his mission-field. Many teachers, especially the far-seeing ones, are taking an interest in the question and in its practical solution, even though it may not have been expressly made one of their duties in the written call which they received. In some congregations, at least, a special committee is appointed or elected which is directly or indirectly responsible for the activities of the young people when the latter are assembled for public meetings in a building belonging to the congregation and therefore under its auspices. In addition, there are the leaders among the young people themselves, most of them serious, consecrated Christians, earnestly concerned about the problem presented in the work among the youth of the congregation. Papers pointing out the difficulties of the work during the critical period of adolescence and youth have been presented and discussed before large and small conferences and associations. All the Scripture passages which in any way have a bearing upon the problem have been quoted, explained, commented upon, applied. In short, nothing has been left undone on the doctrinal and on the theoretical side. The losses which the congregations and the Lutheran Church as such are sustaining among the young people in our circles have been pointed out, for there is no doubt that the net gains in communicant membership in our congregations do not tally with the total accessions by confirmation, after all due allowances for deaths. The reasons for these losses have been named as being chiefly three: the increase in worldliness, as it enters our congregations with the general advance in material wealth; the increase of secret vice, a factor which ought to be kept distinct from the first point, although

there may be an inner relation between the two; the anti-Biblical propaganda as carried on by a great many teachers in high-schools and colleges in our country.

But, although the diagnosis is undoubtedly correct and although the remedy suggested is the only one which will bring healing, yet there is a feeling of uneasiness, of anxiety on the part of the practitioners. It seems that very much depends upon the condition of the individual patient and upon the size of the dose administered. In other words, the point of contact between the young people on the one hand, and their parents, teachers, pastors, and the leaders in their own circles, on the other, is often lacking: there is no sympathetic understanding of the needs of youth, because the problem has so often been attacked and disposed of without a proper knowledge of the physiological functions and the psychological attitude of the adolescents whom the educators were truly anxious to serve. The experience of thousands of young people who, by the grace of God, found their way through the mazes of the dangers besetting the path of the adolescent, confirms this assertion. With all due respect for their parents, teachers, and pastors, with every expression of filial love for them, indeed, they still maintain that they did not receive that guidance and instruction which would have enabled them to avoid some of the pitfalls into which they fell and from which they were rescued, as by a miracle, through the mercy of God, although they may bear the scars of their spiritual accidents on their souls throughout life. And so far as young educators, pastors, teachers, leaders in young people's work, are concerned, they have often deeply deplored the lack of positive knowledge which would have enabled them to approach the difficulties which

confronted them from the proper angle, to cope with the situation as they often found it with at least that degree of assurance which tends to awaken confidence in the young people with whom we are working.

That the ideas here presented are not to be placed in a category with the vagaries of professional pessimists appears from the fact that literature, especially during the last two decades, abounds with books on the subject of approaching the problems of adolescence and youth with a view of establishing a basis of helpful understanding. To those whose dangerous optimism causes them to look upon all such efforts with a deprecating smile it may be of interest to know that the movement has long since passed the experimental stage and that some decidedly tangible results have been obtained. The study of the problems of adolescence and their solution is not a fad, more or less innocuous, having, on the contrary, been found so important and concretely valuable that normal schools and colleges, universities, and theological seminaries everywhere are including it in their course of studies, and the value of the work, as measured by its success, is unquestioned. At least one theological seminary in the West has added the feature of a clinic, combining practical missionary work with the equally important problem of holding the young people of the churches. In introducing these courses these schools have proceeded from the standpoint that a certain amount of knowledge, an acquaintance with the fundamental principles of adolescent growth and phenomena, both physical and mental, was necessary, in order that educators dealing with young people should not be sent out into their respective fields to gain this knowledge by the experimental method without expert direction,

that they should not be required to gain their experience by the empirical process alone. Furthermore, the pastors, educators, and teachers contend, and rightly so, that the mere remembrance of one's own experience in individual cases is not sufficient as a basis for generalizing, since the wide difference in the training and in the environment of men engaged in the work in the past makes it impossible for the single one to advise along general lines on the basis of his own experience alone. To be specific: A man may have been eminently successful in his work among young people in a country district and yet be totally unqualified, on the basis of that experience alone, to do equally successful work in a large city; he may have mastered the situation with ease in surroundings which were entirely German, but would prove a lamentable failure when confronted with the difficulties of the bi-lingual problem or when called into a charge in which the Christian day-school was known by hearsay only. Moreover, the type of people is a very important item, for a procedure which would have been received without a murmur in a neighborhood with only German, or Scandinavian, or English inhabitants, would be received with a storm of protest in a mixed population. The difficulties of the problem are finally enhanced by our increasingly complex civilization, which is upsetting old and fixed traditions like so many houses of cards, by the decline of the home and of home influences, and the many interests outside of the home.

In this emergency the sane and calm study of the psychology of adolescence under the guidance of the word of God offers a foundation of principles and a clear statement of methods which are applicable at all times, in all places, and under all conditions. It is

interesting, at the same time, to note that the soundest principles of the science are in full agreement with Scripture, as all true science and knowledge invariably must be. It does not surprise us, for instance, that there is a sound psychological basis for having our rite of confirmation at the age when we usually do perform it, nor would we think of changing the time just because we find science in conformity with the ancient usage. While we know that neither sex nor age is a hindrance to the work of the Holy Spirit through and in the Word, yet the fact that the physical and mental change in the adolescent is often made use of by the Spirit in taking possession of the heart of the catchumen is accepted by us as a suggestion to concentrate our efforts of winning our children for Christ upon this age and time.

It is with these and other fact in mind that every educator (and that includes not only the parents and teachers, but also the pastors and all leaders in young people's work) will make use of every opportunity presented to him to advance his knowledge of this special study, that of adolescence in all its phases. In order, however, that this study may be properly appreciated in its close relation to the work among our growing youth, the confirmed children in our charge, let us summarize the facts which will enable us to take up the problems of adolescence in their relation to the task of the educator.

\* \* \*

A recent investigator in the field, in attempting to give a definition of adolescence, writes: "The phenomenon of adolescence is to be understood only as it is conceived as the entrance of the individual into the larger life of the race, so that the psyche (the soul

with all its powers) . . . feels the impulsion of irresistible forces . . . impels the adolescent to be and to do all things in his own person" (Blanchard, 16). In order to have some working definition which does not involve the naturalistic viewpoint in just this glaring nakedness let us rather put it thus: "Adolescence is that period of life which, by reason of the gradual transition from childhood to adult age, includes such important and fundamental physical, mental, and psychical changes in the human being as to make it the most critical age of his entire life." It is, in other words, the time when all the energies of life are at flood-tide, sweeping forward with almost irresistible momentum, when all the vital forces usually acquire also the direction which they will keep throughout the rest of their course. It is a time when the turmoil within the heart and soul of the growing boy or girl is so great as sometimes almost to relieve or to deprive them of the responsibility for their actions, when they occasionally plead, and at times with every indication of sincerity, that they can state absolutely no reason for their speaking or acting as they did. It is a period, therefore, when the powerful energies inhabiting the body and the mind of the adolescent, as yet undisciplined and unfettered, must be made available for the benefit of mankind, when the super-abundant life must be harnessed and made useful, but not quelled, for a rude quenching is often synonymous with killing the spirit.

The most obvious indications of adolescence are the physical changes which take place in the growing boy and girl, of which at least those which may be readily observed and distinguished even by a layman are generally known, though the extent of the changes

worked in the entire structure of the body is seldom realized. The statement often made by adults that they surely ought to be familiar with all the phenomena accompanying the physiological changes in adolescence, since they themselves have passed through this period, is almost as ridiculous as that according to which a person who has had a certain disease will claim for himself not only an infallible diagnosis of the ailment itself and of the various forms in which it is liable to manifest itself, but also the one and only, invariably sure, cure for that particular malady, no matter in what form and with what intensity it appears. However, just as there are certain outward manifestations or phenomena which indicate a pathological condition in some part of the human anatomy, even though the specific disease or the particular form of the disease in question may be unknown to the layman, so there are infallible signs showing that the adolescent change has taken hold of a child, even though the extent of these changes and the specific physiological and psychological phenomena in the individual may be a matter of conjecture for months and even years. Parents and educators in general cannot be cautioned too often that the experience of the individual is not the experience of humanity. Nowhere in the educational field is the habit of generalizing on the basis of one or two cases so pernicious in its effects as in that which concerns adolescence. A parent or educator may say, glibly enough: "Such and so were the experiences which I felt or observed in myself when I emerged from childhood into adult life," and be perfectly honest and sincere in making this statement. But there are two points to be kept in mind here. In the first place, the memory of the average adult often plays him the

nastiest tricks in not being reliable on many points of his own period of adolescence. The vividness of the impressions received at that time and the overwhelming force of the surgings from within fade from the memory, by an almost imperceptible gradation, assisted too, by the eagerness to put away childish things as soon as possible when once adulthood has been reached. It is true that incidents from these years, especially escapades and pranks which were fortunate in ending lucky are remembered, but the feelings of boyhood and girlhood, their point of view, their customs, and their standards of action have been lost. Many an adult, if confronted by letters or verses written in the turmoil of adolescent energy or by a forgotten diary which has come to light by some mischance, will deny the validity of the evidence presented with the greatest vehemence, insisting, like the woman in the Mother Goose rhymes: "This is none of I." And, in the second place, the phenomena of adolescence are so many and varied as are the adolescents themselves, and we are often tempted to conclude that some changeling has been put in the place of the child whom we pictured in the light of the remembrance which we have of ourselves in those years. The best we can hope to accomplish is that of placing the young people into groups, usually according to the division by which we distinguish the supernormal, the normal, and the subnormal, that is, such in whom the adolescent change comes with an energy which threatens to sweep away all bounds, such as go through the period and enter into adult life with no extraordinary manifestations, although all the changes which are necessary to produce maturity take place in their case, and finally such as lag behind their fellows and either never, or

very late, reach the stage in which they possess the faculties of adults and may rightly be considered as adults.

The physical and physiological changes which accompany adolescence are the most important between birth and adult life. The first period of rapid growth is in the early years of life, during the age of infancy. But the annual increase of this period gradually drops until the child is between his sixth and eighth or the seventh and ninth year, when it almost stops, and the relatively level curve continues until the sudden rise occurs which is known as the prepubertal acceleration. In the case of girls, this acceleration sets in from one and one-half to two years in advance of boys, and they hold their advantage for two, three, and even four years. During this time, the physical superiority of the girl is very marked, her male competitors being decidedly outstripped in the race for maturity. This advantage is coincident with the fundamental changes of puberty in the girl, the metamorphosis in her case having been accomplished approximately by the time she is sixteen to eighteen years old, although certain types, especially those of the South, mature much more rapidly. It is at this time, when the curve of increase in growth for girls tends toward the level of adulthood that the boys again catch up with the girls, hereafter always remaining abreast of them and, in most cases, partly due to the unnatural life of the modern woman, leaving them behind in physical vigor and in actual bodily strength. The rapid rate of increase of bodily strength in boys continues till the age of eighteen or nineteen, when the curve in their case also tends toward the level. In many cases, and apparently with increasing frequency, due to our unnatural

economic conditions, the growth of both boys and girls, but especially of the latter, is permanently stopped at that age, the result being seen in the many undersized, and even puny, men and women, particularly in our large cities. But under normal conditions, in proper circumstances of living, growth in height will continue until about the age of twenty-five, on an average, and some investigators have found a slight increase in height up to the age of about thirty. Increase in girth and in weight continues, depending upon a great many factors, especially that of rational living, at least until the age of thirty, after which both these points may remain stationary, aside from the tendencies toward corpulence which manifest themselves toward middle age.

During this time of bodily growth the commotion caused by the attempt of the various organs and members to adjust and readjust themselves to the changing conditions causes complications which often approach an actual revolution. Not only is the blood pressure increased, but there is an intensification of all the vital forces of the body, the sex maturity aimed at by the developing body being the fundamental and determining factor. Amid these great and sweeping changes the educator cannot afford to overlook any influence, particularly not that of adverse economic conditions of the environment. The undersized, puny, sickly child of the tenements from the start lacks the physical stamina needed for the successful coping with the forces of adolescence. Add to this that the food consumed by many children in the prepubertal change and in the early years of adolescence is altogether unfit to give their bodies the strength needed for a successful negotiation of the dangerous passage, and we have an

outline of the situation which is, in a way, menacing all our work in the larger cities and in many small ones as well. If we remember, moreover, that it is not only food that is an important factor, but also recreation, amusements, late hours, the use of stimulants and narcotics of all kinds, the conversation usually carried on by them, their mental occupation, all of which tend to weaken rather than to strengthen their will power, we may get an inkling of the difficulties confronting us in this field. For the dangers of overstimulation from the one or the other of the sources mentioned here is especially grave, nor is it a matter of indifference whether pubescence is accelerated or retarded as a result of one or more of these factors.

We might note here, before going on, that the interest of all educators, including teachers and pastors, at this point is by no means a mere academic one. For not only are we vitally concerned in a normal, healthy set of young people in our community as a whole, but we also know, or should know, that most of the factors which have a deleterious effect upon the proper development of young people are such as are sinful, whether the fault be due to ignorance or not. The movies, for example, must be considered by us, not chiefly on account of the probable or possible evil effect of the flickering light on the eye-sight of children and adolescents, nor only by reason of the direct harm to morals, but also because all the sex plays, as well as the indecent exposure which is the rule in many films, overstimulate the sexual organs at the critical stage of their development.

All educators and leaders in the work among young people, especially in the so-called junior work,

but parents above all, should be familiar with the chief outward evidences of adolescent growth, as presented in the organs and members of the body, both the primary and the secondary sexual characteristics coming into consideration here. Of the actual change in the reproductive or procreative organs themselves it is not necessary to speak in this connection. Their enlargement and functioning, the secretions in both sexes and the periodicity of the female sex should be studied with the aid of the proper medical books or under the direction of a good physician or physical director. The changes otherwise visible in girls are those most closely connected with the possible maternity which is the result of the development of the internal organs. In the pelvis the iliac arches broaden, there is an enlargement in the symphysis pubis, the transverse diameter of the pelvis is increased, giving a firmer support to the large gluteal and iliac muscles, lowering the center of gravity and making balancing of the body easier. There is a widening, at the same time, of the chest, the mammary glands being developed until the bust reaches its normal size. Remember that these phenomena of growth are sexual characteristics. In the case of boys, the relation of the secondary changes to the sexual functions is not quite so apparent, but there is also a widening of the pelvic region and of the chest, with some development of the glands on the pectoral muscles. In either sex there is a change in the voice, which in the case of most boys is very noticeable, since they will usually battle for some time with the break in their voice before the actual deepening due to the lengthening of the vocal chords occurs and is definitely established. In girls, the shrill tones of childhood are replaced by

the round and mellow tones of the mature woman with a less noticeable change. The phenomenon of the pubes is the same for both sexes, also the hairy growth in the armpits, which, therefore, belongs to the secondary sexual characteristics and must be treated accordingly. In the girl, a good deal of strength goes into the hair of the scalp, in the boy, into the growth of the beard.

Since the bony structure of the body enlarges very rapidly during the period of adolescence, the muscles are obliged to grow or to stretch along with the bones. One result of this growth is the ungainliness which characterizes the age of puberty, especially in the case of large-boned people. We speak of them as overgrown, as being "all hands and feet." But the matter may assume a serious aspect, for very often bones and muscles do not grow in the same ratio and the ensuing "growing pains" are so severe as to confine boys and girls to their beds. When the adult proportions have approximately been gained, the result will be seen to emphasize the feature of strength in the young man, that of grace and beauty in the young woman, for the amount of adipose tissue just beneath the dermis of the skin is much greater in the female than in the male, just as the amount of the same kind of tissue just above the ankle and up to the calf of the leg in the girl tends to bring out the same element of graceful lines. For this reason, these lines in girls belong to the secondary sexual characteristics and should be treated accordingly. Altogether, the changes brought about by adolescence increase the mutual attractiveness of the sexes, this being a provision of the Creator intended eventually to lead, by His order, to the proper expression of the sexual

functions in holy marriage, to the procreation of children.

To these preliminary considerations, which are intended to serve the purpose of giving us the proper appreciation of some of the difficulties pertaining to the study of adolescence, we might add the fact that the divisions of adolescence are not altogether arbitrary, but will also help us to understand the situation as we must face it in our work among the young people, and, in fact, in all our educational work. The total period, in males, lasts from the 12th or 13th to the completed 24th year, in females from about the 11th to the completed 20th year. The entire period is divided into early adolescence, from the 11th or 12th to the 14th or 15th year, and late adolescence, from the 18th year to the 21st, in females, and to the 25th, in males.

The problems of adolescence, as they concern the educator and the worker among young people, specifically the pastor and the teacher, may be divided as follows. In the last years of the elementary school, especially in the last two years of the grammar grade, the teacher will have the problems of early adolescence to deal with, but the pastor will also be on the lookout for them in his catechumen classes. In the post-confirmation age the work with adolescents, from the standpoint of the pastor, is chiefly done at the times when they register for the Holy Communion, also in Bible classes, in lectures and talks, and in sick-calls, the opportunities of bringing home certain important truths in the case of sickness being especially favorable. Finally, the influence of the pastor should be exerted, even though this be in a secondary degree, through the various organizations for young people's

work. There may be a young people's society with a junior and senior department, there may be formal junior work, or there may be no formal and systematic organization, the young people meeting occasionally upon special occasions, yet the opportunity for doing constructive work is there. The young people in their organizations are independent, to a degree, and yet the pastor will make it a point to be a leading spirit in all their undertakings, educating their members in self-control, deference to others, proper acknowledgment of authority, and many other virtues. The same holds true, of course, of all other leaders in young people's work, and it is an encouraging sign that the number of these people is slowly increasing.

With all these and other factors in mind, we are able to enter upon our study of the adolescent in his relation to the educational activity of the congregation, as exerted through the teacher in the first years, and chiefly through the pastor and his assistants in the later years, with an attitude of loving sympathy, of real interest. For it is in the measure that we solve the problems of adolescence that present themselves to us that we shall keep the hope of the Church, the young people, nurtured as most of them have been in the Christian day-schools, in connection with our congregations and, as we hope, loyal to Christ their Savior.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PROBLEM OF RELATION TO AUTHORITY

THE indictment of the American youth, as made by men and women in the educational world who are in a position to know whereof they speak, is rather alarming, to say the least. "Disregard for law is fast becoming an American characteristic," is the report of the National Education Association Committee on Teaching Morals. Another report says that the great majority of habitual or chronic criminals are persons who have committed their first offense against the laws of the community or state when children under the age of sixteen. As reported in the daily press, a judge of a metropolitan court recently stated: "Youths under twenty-one are brought before me on criminal charges who feel toward the law like hardened criminals. They began by doing what they liked at home, staying out nights until their mates went home and defying their parents to keep them in. Yes, it even began earlier. At fourteen they tell their parents they are not going to school any more, and they don't go. What happens? These boys become loungers on street corners. There they loiter from supper-time to ten or eleven at night or later, mixing, as they must sooner or later, with older boys who are further on the way to becoming criminals. And the fathers say they cannot do anything to prevent this association. In a couple of years these youths have fallen foul of law and order; perhaps they appear as prisoners in the Children's Court, where in the lighter

cases they are remanded to the father's care. . . . The average of penitentiary inmates, as shown by statistics recently supplied by the New York State Prison Commission, is nineteen years. This means that they began their criminal careers at sixteen and seventeen, an age at which no judge sends them to State prison. I do not think people generally realize this flowing tide of youthful depravity, and those who do are despondent and even hopeless for means to stem it." And, finally, one of our most popular writers makes this statement: "They (the young people) have been overindulged, overpampered, overpetted. They have taken pattern after their elders, who, for their part, have fallen into false and strained and unnatural modes of living and thinking. They have not been encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility, nor trained to show consideration for older people. Their good manners appear mainly to be on the top like a coat of varnish; the veneer of their courtesy seems to be no more than skin deep."

The reason for this deplorable condition, with its many manifestations, the majority of educators finds in the utter disregard of authority which many American people seem to consider the prerogative of the citizenship in a free country. Mrs. William F. Scott, of New York, a noted sociologist, about a year ago made the following statement in a leading woman's magazine: "They [many American mothers] teach their children that it is their proud prerogative to disregard everything but the satisfaction of their desires. If they want to scream, let them scream; if they want to fight, let them fight; if they want to bounce a baseball off the wall of a house where some one is sleeping or is very ill, let them do it. If I remonstrated with

a woman because her romping children ruined the terrace up the street or destroyed a lady's flower-bed, or made atrocious noises, she, like as not, got insulted and said hard things to me. Rarely have I found a mother who would even listen to a complaint about her children. Foreigners I find always eager to listen and to train their children; their children are much better mannered than the children of the middle-class native Americans."

We are trying to analyze the situation as we find it, and here is one of the factors which sticks out before our eyes like a sore thumb that refuses to be ignored, namely the fact that American parents are largely responsible for the deplorable lack of reverence and of respect for authority found among children in their teens. The judge referred to above, who stated that the average boy exhibits a tendency to defy his parents adds that the custom of remanding a wayward youngster to his father's care is usually not productive of good results, chiefly on account of the father's attitude in the early years. "But it's too late; he can't do anything with his wayward boy because he abrogated his authority several years earlier. . . . I speak of the boy, but with some differences the same essential things could be said of the girl. She, too, needs discipline and doesn't get it at home or at school. The weakly indulgent mother buys her the clothes she demands in order to look like 'other girls,' and the weakly indulgent mother can't keep her from bad company even if she tries. It is because the girl, no less than the boy, started early in life to give orders to her mother." Speaking in much the same vein, the *Lutheran Witness*, in a statement declaring that the American parent is raising up a generation of unman-

ageable children, depraved in their thoughts and unbearable in their disregard of the comfort and welfare of others, is putting the blame exactly where it belongs. It is in early childhood that the seeds are sown whose harvest is seen in the weeds of vices which characterize the toughs of both sexes in town and country throughout the length and breadth of our beautiful land. The idea which seems to obsess the average American mother (the corresponding half of the parental union being often negligible so far as control of the children is concerned) is this that liberty means doing what every one pleases, regardless of any rights of others. She herself may have been brought up along far different lines, but that very fact serves as a stimulus to her in her endeavor to let her children (or, more exactly, her child) grow up exactly as do the weeds at the roadside. In many cases, in the cities, the children spend all their waking hours, outside of the time spent in school, out in the alleys or in the streets, with absolutely no supervision of any kind. Add to this fact the other, seen in many homes: What the precious darling wants, he gets, from the very first day that he succeeds in making his wants known. It makes no difference whether, according to the best knowledge and experience of the mother, the thing in question is harmful and dangerous or not: the child's demand must be met. The result is seen before the youngster can fairly toddle. A command to come or to go, to leave the little fingers off this or that, or whatever else it may be, is calmly ignored, or obedience is energetically refused. By the time the children are ready to enter their teens, they are the masters of the houses in fact, if not in name. What though the father works overtime in the office, at the factory, or

in the field to meet the increasing demands, what though the mother slaves in order to procure fine dresses for the young ladies and toys for the young gentlemen, getting rough and calloused hands in washing and becoming near-sighted in doing fine sewing: all this counts for nothing beside the fact that the young people want to enjoy life.

This is the situation in the average household when the children of many American families enter into the period of adolescence, with little or no idea or recognition of authority, pampered and indulged in every whim and fancy to the very limit of selfishness. That, in the opinion of the misguided parents, is the preparation for the enjoyment of the great blessings which this great land of the free and home of the brave offers to its citizens.

And then the surge of adolescence comes upon these children, a problem which is exceedingly difficult to handle for even a Christian child that has been brought up in accordance with the rules of God's Holy Word. The difficulty consists chiefly in this that the average adolescent of either sex is apt to resent the idea of authority in any of its phases, to find control and direction of every kind irksome, to rebel at restrictions. The impulse of self-assertion breaks forth more and more; there is a desire for self-expression which is usually strengthened by arbitrary opposition.

It is here that so many parents fail (for they are most vitally interested in this chapter, and therefore the chief points are addressed to them). They have indulged their children to the limit and beyond during their childhood, have permitted them to do exactly as they pleased, but now that they are growing up into rowdies, toughs, and hoodlums they hurriedly attempt

to throw a dam in the way of the oncoming flood. They arise in their might, they assert their authority, often with crushing violence; they rule their households with rods of iron. But the sapling which might, in time, have been bent in the right direction, is past that stage now, in many cases. It has grown so sturdy that such belated efforts will have either no effect at all or will break its young strength. If a child is not trained to respect authority in its early years, he will rarely be trained to do so after he has entered his teens. There is only one consolation, namely that the Word of God, properly applied, will prove effective in molding the character of even such a young person.

One more point must be broached here, however, one which concerns not only the childhood of the average boy or girl, but also its teens, namely that of divided discipline. If children notice at any time (and they are very shrewd in this respect) that parents are not of one mind in matters of authority, that either the mother or the father is inclined to shield a child who has deserved punishment in some way, that there are counter-currents in the persons in authority, then the damage is done. This is true, of course, in school faculties as well, whether these be elementary schools or high-schools and colleges. It is absolutely necessary that those occupying positions of authority be a unit on all questions pertaining to discipline. And if there be a disagreement at any time, this fact must by all means be kept from the children until the matter is adjusted, or irreparable damage may result.

The entire problem, also in so far as it concerns educators and leaders in young people's work in general, is extremely difficult, but not hopelessly so. Christian parents and educators must at all times be

conscious of, and must show the consciousness of, the fact that they are the representatives of God over against their children or the pupils entrusted to their care, for there is a difference only in degree, not in kind, between the authority of a parent and that of a teacher. It is not a matter of choice with them, but it is an obligation laid upon them by the Word of God to uphold their authority. Parents and educators of this kind have wisely insisted upon absolute obedience in infancy and early childhood, and even up to the age of puberty, where this seemed required by the circumstances. The children in their care have learned to obey simply because father or mother or teacher has given the command. All the so-called modern pedagogy which demands democratic ideals from the crib, nursery, and kindergarten up is worse than tommyrot, it is blasphemous in character, and it tends to undermine the very foundations of society as established by the laws of nature and the Word of God. Obedience does not mean that the child will do as parent or teacher commands if or when it understands the reason for the command, but obedience means cheerfully to do what the person in authority asks, whether this be in the nursery, in the kindergarten, in the grades, or — in the army.

It is only when children have been trained to be obedient in this manner, obedience having become their second nature, that the wise educator at home and in school will find it to the child's advantage to explain commands to him within the limits of his understanding. If this is done with the proper amount of caution, tact, and wisdom, the child will soon learn to regard himself as a responsible unit in the social system to which he belongs at that time, whether this

be the family, the class in the grammar grades, or the high-school. He will not take advantage of occasional explanations, but will cheerfully acquiesce if he is told that a certain thing must be done or must remain undone, no reason being assigned for the rule. He will even get so that he will defend the voice of authority against rebellious spirits, by assigning such reasons as are in conformity with the special development of his intellect and moral or ethical understanding at that time.

But the difficulties of educators, of all leaders in young people's work, in fact, are nevertheless increased materially at the time of adolescence, even in the case of Christian children. The tendency of youth to go its own way is particularly strong at that time, most of all where the parents and teachers have not had the proper understanding of the children's problems for some years before the onset of puberty. There is, among other things, usually a wheedling insistence upon indulgence in foolish and dangerous foods, upon sweets and condiments, which often are not only harmful, but positively dangerous, since the blood, with the increased demands which the body makes upon its activity, finds it a hard task to supply every part of the growing body, even with the best of simple and wholesome foods at its disposal. And just as there is a tendency toward excess in this respect, so there is a demand for extravagance in every direction. The girl who formerly was utterly indifferent to the appearance of her dress and of her hair, not to speak of ears and finger-nails, suddenly appears with inordinate and foolish demands for expensive clothes, preferably in the most extreme styles, also for complete manicure sets, for costly and garish combs to

hold up the hair in the rear, and for the most delicate laces. The boy who had to be driven to the wash-basin before every meal and managed nevertheless to retain a shade of color in his skin which was by no means due to excessive pigmentation, suddenly uses up soap with amazing eagerness and, in addition, blossoms out in ties which defy the spectral colors. Everything tends to extremes, to loud colors, to showy clothes, and many a fussy mother hovers round her adolescent children like a hen that has hatched out a set of perfectly normal ducks. And the fact of the matter is that all this turmoil is merely one phase of the spirit of rebellion which lives in the adolescent, a spirit which invariably criticizes the customs of older people and insists upon going its own way.

The wise parent and educator will be careful, during this period, to be a gentle and understanding guide and leader. A happy medium between glaring foolishness and super-correct primness can usually be effected, with some tactful patience. Fortunate is he who retains enough sanity and has a substantial fund of humor at his command during these years, the latter, however, being strictly for individual consumption, and not to be spilled upon the heads of the youths concerned in the form of witty remarks. For if there is any person in the wide world who takes himself seriously it is the adolescent, especially in the first stages. Not to show understanding with his point of view is a breach which shuts out the offender without mercy or recourse.

The matter of finding the guidance of parents and of other older people in general irksome causes more apprehension if the tendency of adolescents is to ignore their parents or teachers entirely. This form of

evading subordination by a sort of neutral or negative manifestation has been nurtured largely by the gang spirit, the same phenomenon also explaining high-school fraternities and sororities. One danger in associations of this kind, to which also the boy scouts, the girl scouts, the camp-fire girls, and other similar organizations belong, consists in their replacing the authority vested by God in their parents and the official representatives of the parents by such vested in officers of their own choosing. Wise and tactful parents will be careful to meet the influences of such organizations by making the home so attractive to the growing children and by being their companions in the best sense of the word, so as to counteract every effort from outside to wean them away. This will, of course, be a difficult matter where there is only one child in the family, or at the most two, but where there is still a normal family life, with an average number of children, the family will be the finest kind of an association for the promotion of everything that is really good for the body, stimulating to the mind, and beneficial to the spirit. This matter will be touched upon once more in Chapter IV.

There is one grave danger connected with the tendency to set aside authority during the age of adolescence, and that is one of open rebellion, appearing in milder forms as truancy and deliberate cutting of classes and work. This tendency is, unfortunately fostered by the many opportunities offered children before they ever reach their teens to hear the arguments of rank socialism and of other anti-governmental philosophies. Immature as the judgment of children is at this time, they often draw the most dangerous conclusions, which they promptly proceed to put in

practise in their immediate environment. When matters reach this stage, their successful handling requires the most skilful and tactful handling, in order not to ruin the career of the young people either by criminal negligence in ignoring the matter, or by thoughtless severity in quenching the movement outright, without proper instruction. The person who is able to gain and to hold the confidence of youths of either sex in such cases will usually unearth the real or the supposed motive for the rebellious behavior. So much having been attained, the application of the Word of God will rarely fail of results.

After this somewhat general discussion, let us speak in a more specific manner, first, with reference to battling the unhygienic conditions which often result in insistence upon indulgences, accompanied by an ignoring of the persons in authority, a calm disregard of their remonstrances and protests. Of this G. S. Hall, the noted psychologist, says: "I am convinced that one of the causes of diseased cravings, which may lead to wrong food habits and to intemperance is due to the fact that the normal changes of appetite for both quality and quantity of food are perversions of normal appetite, so often unnoticed and unmet. Now judicious oversight, perhaps eked out by a little wholesome authority, does more to push the psycho-physic organism on to pass safely over the immature stages and dangers of arrest, and to come to full maturity with a real maximum of utilized nutrition, than almost any other influence" (*Adolescence*, I, 253). In other words, if the average adolescent gets a sufficient quantity of wholesome food and in a pleasing variety, accompanied, if necessary, by such a show of frills in the decorations of the table and

of the viands themselves as will satisfy his craving for exaggeration, then he will not long for the spices and condiments and sweets and alcoholic drinks of restaurants and cabarets. Fussiness and authority must be mingled in just the right proportion in order to overcome dangerous tendencies.

A second specific danger connected with the problem of relation to authority during the period of adolescence is this that boys and girls, through their high-school and college associations, grow away from parents, home surroundings and the directing and restraining influence of the old teacher and pastor. The situation may sometimes be rendered more difficult by the presence of a "crush" on the part of the growing girl, which causes her to single out some teacher of either sex as an ideal and to load upon that person a devotion which often becomes annoying unless treated with proper tact. The ideal conditions for the development of such a situation exist when the parents, by dint of the hardest kind of work, manage to give their children a better education than that which they themselves received, while they, at the same time, make no effort to keep up with the times, at least to the extent of understanding the studies of the young scholars. It takes an unusual amount of sense and tact in an adolescent to overcome the handicap of such a situation and to retain the old respect for the parents, especially if the children form friendships with young people whose parents are well-to-do or wealthy, whereas they are poor, in which event the social distinction complicates matters.

We keep in mind here, of course, as we do throughout the discussion, that the respect demanded by the Fourth Commandment does not depend upon the social

position or the learning of the parents. The latter themselves, as well as pastors, teachers, and leaders in young people's work everywhere, will be sure to emphasize this fact whenever the occasion seems opportune, and very often out of season as well. It cannot be brought out too strongly in this age of turmoil and the overthrow of all human and divine authority. One social worker is so impressed with the menace of the present situation that he says: "Old-fashioned ideas of parental authority should be insisted on, and where it is resisted I see no better or surer way to enforce it than by judicious corporal punishment." In this connection several other factors might be noted, however. One is this that parents very often cheapen themselves at the expense of the children, unduly placing their children in the foreground and even in the lime-light, while they retire to such a distance as to hide their light completely. Just because son or daughter is going to high-school or college, it does not follow that the parents must be satisfied with shabby clothes, of a style which immediately marks them as hopelessly out-of-date. Nor does it follow that mother will scrub the kitchen and perform other menial tasks while daughter sits in the parlor with the latest novel, or that father must give up his favorite chair and retire to regions invisible just because son is entertaining some of his friends. Indulging the children in the manner indicated will invariably react upon the parents and tend to take away the respect which the children should have for them. In most cases, also, it will be possible for the parents to remain abreast of the times, even if they will risk giving their children a decidedly better education than they themselves had. If the children are

taught from childhood to take their part of the home duties, to shoulder their part of the family's responsibilities, as their position in the little community requires of them, then mothers and fathers will have at least a part of the evenings for the study of good books on subjects of general interest, perhaps along the very lines in which the children are specializing. Their mature grasp of matters will enable them to point out the right thought to the children in more than one instance, and there will be more of fellowship in the home circle. Even the teachers and pastors of such young people will do well to heed these hints. In the case of one pastor, at least, it was found a bond of no mean strength which bound him to his young people, when they found that he was just as willing and able to discuss problems in algebra and rules in Latin grammar with them as the more serious things pertaining to their soul's salvation, in fact, this intimate contact with his young people gave him many an opportunity to find out just what their spiritual needs were.

A matter which requires a great deal of tact and practical wisdom is that pertaining to the transition from the absolute obedience of infancy and childhood to the relative obedience of adolescence. It is very clear that the "not provoking the children to wrath" is meant especially for this age, for it is in these years that there is the greatest danger of clashes between parents and children, as noted above. Pedagogical wisdom requires that parents and educators take into account the developing intellect of the young people in their care. They will make it a point, if possible, to make clear their reasons for certain commands, rules, and regulations. One ounce of cheerful cooper-

ation is worth a pound of enforced obedience, unless we are dealing with a case of stubborn meanness. This does not mean that prizes will continually be held out before the children for the fulfilling of duties which are theirs to perform by virtue of their subordinate position in the home. But they must be made to feel that they, as members of the household, are under obligations to hold up their end of the common work, so far as their strength will permit. Nor should their work always be converted into a game. Life has stern duties, and not always such as are pleasant, and the growing children should learn to perform every duty with the willingness which seeks to serve the Lord in even the smallest and homeliest tasks, instead of trying to appear in the eyes of others either as martyrs to a tyrannical system or actuated by an ambition which is often the outgrowth of the meanest spite. To bring about such cheerful cooperation an understanding should be established at the very beginning of the dangerous period, not merely tacit, but by an express agreement, according to which the children may feel at liberty to come to either their parents or their teachers and pastors, and, of course, to the leaders in young people's work in the congregation, with any question on which they desire enlightenment. Their problems and difficulties are very real and very serious to them, and a mere brushing them aside with the remark that the children will understand by and by undoubtedly will sever the tie which should bind the young and inexperienced to the older and more experienced at that time. One thing is sure, namely that the adolescent seeking information and not obtaining it from parents, teachers, or trustworthy older people will most assuredly get it elsewhere and

often not in the most reliable form, not to speak of the harm done in losing one of the finest opportunities to weld the hearts more closely together.

In just what way parents and educators are liable to make grave mistakes with regard to the young people in their care can easily be illustrated by concrete examples. In one case a father had sent his two girls to business school and had them trained for special work. They finished their courses and obtained work, gradually being advanced to better positions. But the parents moved away from the city and, although they did not need the girls at home and were not even dependent upon them for financial help, the selfishly demanded that the latter give up their positions and follow them. There were no openings for the two young women in sight in the new home, and yet they went because they were overcome by the flood of threats and demands that they do their duty toward their parents, whereas their duty really was in the positions which they were filling. If they had been boys instead of girls, the chances are that they would have clung to their places, as they had a right to, unless we should hold that the obtaining of work is a matter of bare chance, and not regulated by the Lord according to the individual's ability to serve God and the neighbor with the gifts imparted to him, whether these be physical or mental.

Cases of a similar nature are those of young men who, with the consent of their parents, have been trained to become pastors or teachers, the understanding being, of course, that they will go where they are called at the close of their studies. But it has been found and is being found, in an increasing number of cases, that the mere subjective attitude,

the selfishness of the parents, is opposed to a call to another country, or to a certain section of our own country, or to a position in the rural districts, with the result that the attitude of father or mother determine what call may be accepted by the young man. That is consulting with flesh and blood with a vengeance. This remark, of course, does not apply in cases where there are individual, valid reasons why the parents raise objections.

We could finally multiply concrete cases in which parents assume that they have absolute authority concerning the giving of their children in marriage. Now while we deeply deplore the fact that, in America at least, the transgression is usually on the other side, the authority of the parents being coolly ignored by the children, we should note here, nevertheless, the following truths regarding the power of the parents. They have no authority to prohibit their children to get married, for by God's order the sexual desire, His own creation, is to find its gratification in holy wedlock, and therefore marriage is a natural right, as Luther says. Parents also have no right to ignore an affection which the son or the daughter protests that he or she is feeling; no matter what they finally decide, they cannot put aside an objection advanced without a careful weighing of facts. Parents, finally, have no right to deny their children marriage on account of the nature of the work or by reason of the profession which the man has chosen, in itself, unless it be a sinful one. Here again we must keep in mind that our paths through life are not subject to a blind chance, but are under the direction of God, and this fact should be taken into account by pastors and by

parents in dealing with questions coming under this heading. (Cp. *Keuschheit und Zucht*, Chap. 3.)

In connection with the question of relative obedience, as explained above, it would be well to discuss, at least briefly, that of pupil government, or a limited form of self-government in all our institutions of higher learning. This does not mean anarchy, nor does it savor of a perversion of the Fourth Commandment; it simply means that the young people, under the tactful direction of the president of the institution or of some other person designated for that purpose, will be organized as a democracy, a close parallel to such a government being that of our territories before being admitted to statehood. It is a matter of common observation and experience that the relation between teachers and pupils is not cordial, unless in exceptional instances. Not only is there a surplus of mechanical rules, but the manner in which they are brought to the attention of the pupils and afterward enforced is bound to work a blind antagonism, no matter how excellent the laws are. A form of self-government, not absolute, but limited, under the direction of the principal of the school, will probably result in the adoption of the very same set of rules, and the zeal which would then be shown, as experience has amply demonstrated, for the support and enforcement of laws which are the code of the pupil-state, would be a revelation only to such as have not seen the system in action. It is a training in social consciousness, together with practical work in civics, whose value has not yet been sufficiently appreciated. So much is sure: Martinets produce cowards and sneaks, but not men and women. "Educational efficiency requires cooperation between teachers and pupils, and coopera-

tion means the elimination of the school consciousness and the substitution for it of the social consciousness" (Swift, 68).

And the reason for this strange feeling on the part of the adolescent, his reason for being, in many cases, the personification of antagonism to existing rules, is often rooted in his over-sensitiveness to the least rebuke, as being an evidence that the instructor or parent or person in authority does not like him or her, for the same thing is found in both sexes. In girls, of course, this feeling may sometimes take on a hysterical tinge and cause them for the time being to become practically unmanageable.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PROBLEM OF SEX

THERE is probably no better way of introducing the delicate topics treated in this chapter than by quoting a section of Luther's exposition of the Sixth Commandment in the Large Catechism. He writes: "Now, I speak of this in order that the young may be so guided that they conceive a liking for the married estate, and know that it is a blessed estate and pleasing to God. For in this way we might in the course of time bring it about that married life be restored to honor, and that there might be less of the filthy, dissolute, disorderly doings which now run riot the world over in open prostitution and other shameful vices arising from disregard of married life. Therefore it is the duty of parents and the government to see to it that our youth be brought up to discipline and respectability, and when they have come to years of maturity, to provide for them (that is, to have them married) in the fear of God and honorably; He would not fail to add His blessing and grace, so that men could have joy and happiness from the same. . . . But because among us there is such a shameful mess and the very dregs of all vice and lewdness, this commandment is directed also against all manner of unchastity, whatever it may be called; and not only is the external act forbidden, but also every kind of cause, incitement, and means, so that the heart, the lips, and the whole body may be chaste and afford no opportunity, help, or persuasion to inconstancy," (*Concordia Triglotta*, 641. 639.)

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Original from  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT  
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

The average boy or girl enters upon the period of adolescence, upon the years of the greatest turmoil throughout his physical being, with practically no knowledge of the most important facts concerning his body and its functions, so far as his sexual life is concerned. The anatomy, physiology, and hygiene of the sexual organs, which occupy the center of the stage during these years, is as unknown to most youths as Sanskrit. They are handicapped during the most critical period in the development of their bodies by an abysmal ignorance. The knowledge of sex which the average adolescent possesses has been obtained away from home and the influence of older, calmer people, chiefly on the street, in the alleys, in whispered conferences in lavatories, from vile companions, both young and old, from lewd books smuggled into schools and homes, from the flood of obscene pictures covering city and country, from art in its most suggestive forms, from the advertisements of quack doctors as the latter are distributed freely in certain sections and even smuggled into the schools, from the stream of sewage which seems to flow always just beyond the knowledge of the parent and the teacher. Of this we read: "Modern society, or rather modern commercialism, has, with an almost sardonic insight into the psychology of youth, set a multitude of traps to thwart the normal method of development. The moving-picture shows, even the censored ones, are teeming with suggestions of sex impulse; so also the vaudeville and the popular songs, the dances, the stories, the pictures, whether of genuine art or on flaming billboards, all combine to give definite form and content to the sex susceptibility which should at first have been diffused throughout the personality, giving it

character and driving power" (King, 103). One of the foremost woman authors of America analyzes the situation thus: "These panderers always find particularly lucrative the exploitation of sex. And youth reacts quickly to their appeal. It is full of the joy of life, it is slavishly imitative, and if it is not erotic it is and normally should be sex-inquisitive. So we find that, to make a Roman holiday and to line its own pockets, maturity is exploiting our young, tempting them to extravagance of fashion and of spending, luring and cajoling them to absurd and sensual dress, to strange dancing and lurid music, to all the things we deplore and marvel at. We find our youth sold in the open market to fatten the purses of those mature and calculating individuals who pay an erotic band that it may dance."

It is a strange fact that some children, a good many, in fact, are able to pass through the years of infancy and childhood and to come into contact with the murky stream of perverted sexual information rather frequently without really becoming conscious of any of its lewdness, or being affected by it. But let these same boys and girls hear the same stories, receive the same information, after the changes attending puberty have begun in their own bodies, and the reaction may work the most dreadful havoc. The case of one boy is on record who, although in possession of the usual distorted information concerning sexual relations, had not been influenced and contaminated by this knowledge. When, however, he entered boarding-school and, on his first night in a large dormitory with some twenty other boys, mostly older than himself, he heard the stories which were there told from the store accumulated during the summer

holidays, he was so violently affected that he was eventually driven to masturbation, and could be cured of this terrible habit only after years of heart-rending work on the part of his parents. Contrast with this picture that of a girl who has been given the information which she needs concerning her body as she grew, given to her in quiet, heart-to-heart talks, and see her quietly but firmly shaking off the restraining hand of an older girl who is aching to impart to her some luscious scandal, and hear her say: "I talk over such matters with my mother only, and it would be a good thing for you if you did the same," — and there is some reason for thinking very seriously.

For so much is certain: The information which young people must have concerning their sex and the phenomena connected with it, the structure and care of the reproductive organs, and, eventually, the relation between the sexes in holy marriage, should come to them in a clean form, or the result may be, and often is, untold misery. The knowledge of sex should be developed in a general way, first of all in an esthetic appreciation of nature and of the wonder of God's works, in a passion for lofty ideals, for a thoroughly sound body, one able to perform the work which is destined for the share of every individual in life. Next comes the task of taking away the false glamor, the veil of impure secrecy which prudery has hung before the subject of sex. And, finally, there must come the emphasis upon the necessity of clean, pure thoughts for the best development of body and mind.

Needless to say, the burden of the responsibility rests upon the parents. Says Dr. Cope: "Certain confidences are too long deferred, so long that they become forced and unnatural. This it is that makes it so

difficult for fathers to talk to their boys about sex matters. They know they ought to do it; they know no one else can do it so well and that, while they wait, these minds are being filled with misinformation or with foul, gutter-bred facts. Yet they hesitate because they do not know where to begin; they have lost the connection. They failed to realize that there never was a time, from the day the boy could ask an intelligent question, when they did not have a duty and opportunity to teach him. They waited, thinking they would begin when the so-called dangerous years arrived. But all years are dangerous years in (this respect) that, unless truth is told — in suitable terms — untruths will be told and will become seeds of evil." (*The Parent and the Child*, 134.) The education of children with respect to the knowledge of sex should begin in infancy. Even before they exercise themselves in volitional acts, they must be taught not to play with the organs concerned at any time, also not to scratch in case the parts are itching. Parents must see to it that the children are bathed very carefully and that they are taught to keep the parts clean with scrupulous care. Any pain, chafing, inflammation, must be reported at once. At the same time, children must learn to regard the organs as private parts, which are neither to be handled nor to be spoken about to others. It will usually be sufficient to impress upon the children that the organs are so delicately constructed as to make their disarrangement very easy, and that this may be done, not only by actually handling the parts, but also by thinking about them too much, when evil companions tell dirty stories. It is self-evident, by the way, that the stork-myth has no place in a decent Christian household. The children

may be told, at an early age, that it is God who gives babies to the parents. And it will not be long before they may be told that, just as the baby chicks and the baby robins have a warm nest under the body of their mother, so the human babies have a warm nest in the body of their mother until such a time as the Lord thinks it safe for them to live in the open air and enjoy the sunshine. Later, at the beginning of puberty, the child should be given the proper information about the structure of his or her sexual organs and be told just what takes place through the power of the almighty Creator as they develop to maturity. It is at this time, also, that adolescents must be warned against deliberately day-dreaming on sexual subjects. Frankly they must be told the dangers attending an over-rapid development of the organs. And when they have reached full maturity, perhaps even before that time, an open discussion of the relation in holy wedlock is altogether in order, lest also here false ideas, extreme and sensual notions, become fixed in their minds and endanger their happiness and that of others in the married estate.

But while the parents are chiefly responsible for the proper imparting of sex knowledge, teachers and pastors, educators and leaders of young people's work in general, are no less concerned in the bringing up of the adolescents as clean, healthy young people. In our schools, of course, and in confirmation classes, the Sixth Commandment is not omitted, and we carefully follow the old pastoral rule to make the instructions on the matters touched upon positive as to the proper observation of chastity and decency, both in wedlock and outside of its bounds. This does not exclude, however, that we also take cognizance of the many dangers

which are threatening the chastity of our youth. It is self-evident that every trace of levity and flippancy will be absent at such a time. Teachers will also, from the very first year of school age, but especially in the upper grades and in high-school, watch over the toilets. If children of every age go there unusually often and stay unusually long, coming back either with a wild excitement showing in their eyes or in great listlessness, it may be well to warn the individual child or to have a confidential talk with the father. This requires great tact, of course, but it is a duty which cannot be evaded, nevertheless. It is self-evident, also, that the teacher inspect the toilets from time to time to see that lewd inscriptions and drawings are not made or do not remain there. A gentle, but very grave talk to the children in case indications of general smuttiness are found will often stop the evil. In the catechumen class, where the treatment of the Sixth Commandment will be still more in the nature of a pastoral talk, there will be more understanding on the part of the pupils, for some of them, at least, are then in the age of puberty. It has been found advantageous to divide the class for a special talk at the end of the work in this commandment, taking the sexes alone and warning each group against the special dangers and temptations which may be expected. One thing should be understood, namely this: If it develops in the course of such a talk that the children, or any of them, have not received their knowledge of sex from their parents, either directly or by means of some sound books on sex hygiene, they must be urged to seek this information in just that way. If the parents feel unequal to the task, they should make use of good books, of which there are a number on the market,

or they should have their family physician talk to their children, if possible, seeing to it, by all means, that the growing children get the right information and that the results of wrong information be counteracted. It might even be advisable, at some time during these years, to have a trustworthy physician give a talk to a whole class of young men, and a competent registered nurse to a corresponding class of young women. In short, we must face the issue squarely, or we may be sorry when it is too late. And, what is more, parents, teachers, and pastors, all those interested in work among young people, must stand together in this question, in order, by all means, to do what is best for the young people.

That the imparting of proper knowledge regarding sex is essential appears from the fact that sex perversions have reached a state which would seem almost incredible were it not for reports rendered as the result of recent investigations. There is a great number of phenomena which we might discuss in connection with this subject, but we shall confine ourselves to those most frequently encountered.

Physical masturbation is found in children at a very early age, but especially during the age of adolescence, and somewhat more frequently in boys than in girls. The severity and the frequency of the habit varies, but in either sex it rarely stops without the full orgasm. The habit is due in some cases to a latent form of mental derangement or to inherited pathological tendencies. More often, however, the reason is sexual precocity, when the development of the procreative organs has been stimulated by pampering, by spices and condiments, by salacious novels, by lewd environment, and by other factors. Most often, how-

ever, masturbation is the result of ignorance. It happens in quite a number of cases, of course, that the young people are taught the evil habit by degenerate companions; but frequently the habit is formed without the consciousness of wrong, it is more of a blundering into the pernicious habit, due to the congestion of the organs or to an accidental discharge or a feeling of pleasure following friction. The evil effects in either sex are about equally severe, for whereas in the case of boys the losses take away materials which might well have been used by the body in building up every organ, in the case of girls the orgasm results in a corresponding nervous reaction and depression which is quite as harmful to them as the losses with the nervous reaction are to the boys. Although in some cases masturbators reach the stage where they are absolute slaves of the vice and not only ruin their body but also their intellect to the point of insanity, yet, by a fortunate dispensation of Providence, the majority of cases turns out less terrible. It may take years, of course, before a masturbator throws off the fetters of the shameful and degrading habit, but it can be done, especially when the realization of the degrading shamefulness of the sin is aided by the will stimulated by the fear of God. It is along these lines that parents and educators must work in case they are informed that young people of either sex in their charge are addicted to the habit or in case they are compelled to draw their own conclusions from the physical appearance of either the growing boy or girl. The chances are that young people who have received their information on sexual matters in the right way and know the care of the organs will not succumb so easily, but the procedure on the part of the older

person in either case is much the same, namely to show the greatness and the filthiness of the sin, to work a realization of its guilt, to point the sinner to Christ, and to stand by him or her with full moral support in the battle against the vice until the final victory has been won. In many cases, the family physician may be able to assist with a remedy which will aid the body in repairing the ravages produced by the habit. In case the young people confide in their teachers or their pastor, much the same order of procedure will be followed. In the majority of the cases, if not in all, it will be advisable to have the guilty one reveal the state of conditions to the parents, in order to get their cooperation; in advanced cases this may invariably be necessary, but the secrecy of the confessional must not be violated.

Related to this vice, and much more prevalent than educators cared to admit even a few years ago, is that of homosexuality, where an abnormal attraction in members of the same sex results in improper relations. Investigations have shown that this vice is found in practically every boarding-school at one time or other, as well as in other institutions where the one or the other sex is strictly isolated. In boys, the vice practically always results in pederasty, the filthy boast of ancient Rome. There are instances, however, in which degenerates have resorted to sodomy, as described in the Bible, even in its bestial form, that of cohabiting with animals. That this inexpressibly vile sin has not been abolished in modern times, is seen from occasional press reports, although news of this kind is usually suppressed. The treatment of the vices is the same as that in cases of masturbation, to which they are related, but it should be easier to point out

the monstrous abnormality of the transgression, the unusually degrading aspect of the vice. Our call must be: "Repent, and believe the Gospel," and we must be ready to back up this admonition with all the moral power which we possess.

There are some peculiar secondary manifestations of sexual perversion during adolescence and even later in life which are often overlooked by parents, educators, and workers among young people. There is, for instance, sadism, the quasi-sexual delight in observing and therefore in producing mental and bodily torture. The reaction seems to produce a real sexual gratification in those addicted to this perversion. It sometimes expresses itself in bullying, in lording it over others on the basis of real or supposed physical superiority, or in sharp and senseless ridicule. The campaign against hazing, as conducted in our country, is just as well founded as that against the terrors of the inquisition a few centuries ago, for both are due to the same inclination, the fierce exultation over the writhing of the victims, for which reason also the partial stripping of the victims is usually found. The total stripping of people in the barbaric custom of tarring and feathering is a very extreme manifestation of this tendency and will probably lead to sexual outrages. People indulging in such sport, even in a very mild form, whether they be pupils or teachers, whether it be physical or mental agony which they try to produce, are in reality gratifying an abnormal sexual desire, for the satisfaction reacts upon the reproductive organs.

The strange correlate of sadism is masochism, the delight of the member of one sex in being tortured, physically or mentally, by a member of the opposite

sex. The perversion, in either sex, often reaches a degree which actually challenges the tormentors. But the satisfaction obtained by the gratification of the wish is sensual, one of sex, and very often affords all the delights of the primary perversions, in a stimulation of the organs which may lead to worse manifestations. The treatment of these phenomena, which are comparatively common, consists in careful information, also with regard to the close relation between these transgressions and those expressly prohibited in the Fifth Commandment, and the evil effect upon the mentality and upon the moral development of those who become guilty of these vices.

But there are still other sexual perversions and manifestations of the sexual instincts and the feelings tending toward reproduction, which are fully as important as those discussed till now, especially in their influence upon the development of adolescents. We cannot, for example, ignore the factor of dreams containing the sexual element. That these dreams occur in both sexes is a matter of common knowledge, so common, in fact, that the Semitic word for dream (*chalom*) really designates the sexual dream, as it is found in boys and girls on the threshold of adult life. This remains true in spite of the fact that some few boys and a somewhat greater number of girls cannot recall dreams of this nature. In some cases this may be due to abnormal development, when the sexual phenomena are either entirely absent or nearly so, or we may be dealing with a case of such complete repression into the realm of the subconscious mind that the person concerned cannot remember or does not recognize the sexual features. In boys, moreover, the sexual dream is often accompanied by night

losses, a fact which tends to impress the dream upon the memory very strongly. The literature in this field is sufficiently large to meet the requirements of any investigator. That girls are subject to erotic dreams in the same way as boys has been shown by recent inquiries and investigations. The following extracts from letters by girls with more than an average education will bear this out. "In myself they (erotic dreams) occur after a dance, or any occasion where there has been unusual sexual stimulus." "Dreamed of having sexual intercourse." "I cannot recall definitely any erotic dream, though I often have them. . . . Complete sexual experience is not necessary for erotic dreaming. My sexual experience has been all but complete, and I have dreamed only a small part of it, such as kissing, physical contact, and pressure, but other girls of my acquaintance have dreamed all this and more." "These (vivid erotic dreams) began when I was twenty-one, and have recurred frequently ever since. Sometimes I awaken before the act is completed, but more often an entire sexual orgasm occurs." "I have often dreamed of having sexual intercourse with him (her lover) after he has been caressing me." "Became conscious of her own sexual knowledge through erotic dreams." (Blanchard, 70. 73. 74. 84. 101.) In addition to this information, which certainly is frank enough, it should be noted that repression or sublimation plays a very important part, so that there are many dreams belonging to the category of sexual dreams, in which the direct erotic element seems to be wanting. This is true in dreams where a partial or a total exposure of the body in the nude occurs or where there is some sort of injury in or near the procreative organs.

If the fact that young people are subject to erotic dreams is brought to the attention of parents or educators, the latter must be very careful not to be over-ready with condemnation. Sexual dreams are undoubtedly, in themselves, merely a factor in the normal sexual development of every human being. At the same time, it cannot be overlooked that they also are tainted by the curse of hereditary sin. It will be best, therefore, to warn against deliberate erotic thinking and speaking, also against amorous literature in every form, especially where love-scenes are pictured with great vividness, against obscene or suggestive pictures, including such in which kissing and caressing is emphasized in any manner. In fact, the warning in our days must go out against sexual stimulus of every kind, also such as is received in kissing games, in caressing of any kind, in physical contact where the erotic element is obvious or even possible, for if, as a result of such stimulus, dreams of this kind occur with any degree of frequency, they are directly harmful in both sexes. Occasional night losses and occasional sexual orgasms in this form have not been found to be harmful, but if they happen in either sex more than once a week, and particularly if they occur several nights in succession, they will probably work much harm.

In considering the problem of erotic dreams, we have already broached the subject of mental masturbation. This phenomenon may be due to various reasons. The day-dreaming propensity of many young people, for instance, should be discouraged very decidedly, for in all too many cases the flight of their thoughts, though at first within the limits of the permissible and even the laudable, will be concerned with

sexual matters, not only with kisses and caresses, but with obscenities of the worst kind. Then there is obscene conversation, whether in more or less veiled allusions or in outright smutty talk, found in the case of both sexes and, unfortunately, persisting through adult life in some individuals. It seems that some people cannot begin a conversation without introducing a suggestive story. But whether the lewdness be brought out in the form of an indecent allusion, a smutty joke, or a full scandalous story, the reaction is the same: mental masturbation. And the very same danger is present in the great majority of modern plays, whether these be presented in the spoken drama on the stage of a first-class theater or in the movies in the next block. The poison may enter the minds of the audience in various ways. Very often it is the factor of indecent exposure, of presenting entire limbs and parts or the whole body in the nude, usually accompanied by some suggestive glance or act. There is the factor of indecent acts, violent caressing, clinging, hugging, holding on the lap, etc. There is the factor of suggestion, when the interior of houses of ill-fame or of bed-rooms is shown, the acts preceding or following being intended to give both the cue and the direction to the thoughts of the audience. In all these and in other cases, the satisfaction which the great majority of the people in the audience feels, is not that due to the appeal of art, to the esthetic appreciation of beauty, but that of sexual gratification, of mental masturbation. The following press-clipping speaks for itself: "Movieitis, in its more virulent form, is apt to produce serious consequences, especially in young folks. Its effects are to be seen in disordered imaginations, vitiating tastes, nervous irri-

tability, while frequently it is evidenced by a general lack of interest in clean and wholesome recreations. Teachers complain of listlessness and of dullness on the part of pupils afflicted with this ailment, and physicians attribute not a little of the alarming increase in defective vision among boys and girls to its presence. Perhaps its most serious consequences are to be observed in the false and distorted views of life it so frequently engenders among them. Evidences of this are to be found from time to time in juvenile experiments in crime, in a flippant disrespect and irreverence for fundamental moral principles, and in dwarfed and perverted views of courtship and the marital relation." (*Watchman-Examiner*, quoted in *Lutheran Witness*, Nov. 9, 1921.) And in *Signs of the Times*, December 13, 1921, we read: "Popularizing crime and profiting by iniquity! What true American would not rebel at the thought of such a traffic? Scenes which a generation ago were enacted only in the backwoods by some tyrant, a fugitive from law and order, have, in this generation, been introduced into society, made popular, and offered for sale in the moving-picture theater. If we can judge the appetites and passions of American society by the pictures which receive the greatest patronage, truly our cities are in the same condition as ancient Sodom before her destruction." A man very prominent in the educational world of to-day, namely Doctor O'Shea, has the following remark on the burlesque theater of our days: "In this connection mention should be made of the influence of the gayety or burlesque theater in spreading vice. The chief characteristic of the shows presented in them is lewdness of speech, in song and especially in the dance. Women who are reading these

lines would probably not be admitted to the burlesque theaters in their respective communities, but they can gain some notion of what goes on within by observing the pictures on the billboards in front of these places. A burlesque performance is built around the suggestion of sexual vice. The actors are for the most part gathered out of the red light and tenderloin districts, and they aim to suggest in dress, song, and dance what they practise in the brothel." (*Mental Development and Education*, 216.) Unfortunately a part of this censure would now apply also to many of the so-called decent shows.

The instruction and the warning with reference to all the forms of mental masturbation cannot take too careful, too solemn, and too serious a form. For in every one of these cases the gratification felt by the normal person is not an esthetic, elevating reaction, is not of a pure kind, cannot be recommended, for it is a satisfaction of sex which is outside of the pale permitted by God. Every indulgence in pleasure of this kind will not increase, but will very materially diminish the power of resistance to sins of lewdness in thoughts, words, and deeds. Nor should it be forgotten, from the standpoint of physiology and hygiene, that the close of relation between the brain and the sexual organs make the reaction very strong in the case of every erotic stimulus. But whenever the development or the life of the procreative organs (after these have reached their maturity) is stimulated beyond the quiet growth which nature intended, there is bound to be trouble in some form.

Another important point is that of dress in both sexes, but particularly in the female sex. It is true that frank statements have been made by girls and



women, acknowledging that the manner in which men were dressed affected them sexually. This is undoubtedly true if the clothes are so fitted and worn as to draw attention to sexual characteristics, as when the trousers fit too tight in the crotch. It is true also that the complaints of the middle of the sixteenth century, as voiced by Luther, Melanchthon, and other educators, could, in a measure, be repeated when men appear in clothing which is all too scanty or when they affect indecent bathing suits, but, on the whole, the dress of men has usually, and especially in the last half-century, been far more decent than that of women. We will gladly concede that the average girl who follows the extreme styles in vogue at any time to their superlative degree does so "not merely to arrest the attention of the male, but to reenforce her own self-respect and conceal his failings" before the keen eyes of her sister-conspirators. But what she actually accomplishes, is shown in a very frank statement by Doctor Lowry. "Unmarried men, especially in large cities, are thrown constantly in surroundings where they have their sexual desires stimulated. Among the things that contribute to arouse erotic thoughts are the exhibitions of suggestive pictures, as seen in the 'free museums for men only,' and some of the moving picture shows, as well as in supposedly high-class theaters. Suggestive literature is plentiful and freely distributed. *The busy streets throng with girls whose business it is to arouse the interest of young men by their personal charms.* This constant stimulation of the sexual desires, without appropriate relief, has a harmful effect upon the young man's nervous system." (*Himself*, 129. 130.) It should be noted here that indecency may not be the motive for the exposure

which is practised by women wearing ball-dresses and by all those who wear the over-short and low-cut dresses which style was said to decree during the last few years, but indecency is the result nevertheless. Every style of dress which accentuates female characteristics and charms cannot be worn by a Christian girl or woman. The fulness of the bust and the width of the hips are primary sexual characteristics and should therefore never be stressed in the dress of women. And the curve of the shoulders, of the upper bust, of the arm, of the leg, pertains to the secondary sexual characteristics, is a display of charms peculiar to the female sex, a mark of the age in life when procreation is possible in women. This, then, constitutes sexual appeal, whether this be deliberate or not on the part of the woman, and whether the men who note this display are always directly conscious of the sexual appeal or not. In other words: It is indecent to expose shapely arms and legs, either bare or in the even more suggestive veiling and sheer hosiery which still seems to be in style. It is indecent to wear waists or gowns which expose the graceful lines of shoulders and bust in a well-developed woman. It is indecent to wear dresses of such thin material as to reveal the outline of the body beneath. It is indecent for a girl or woman to wear such shoes or such figured hosiery as calls attention to her ankles or legs or is in any other way suggestive. We emphasize this point once more: These phenomena are not merely significant of the change from childhood to adult age, as is the growth in height and the proportionate physical development, which is common to both sexes, but they characterize the change from girlhood to womanhood, they are signs of the possibility of maternity in the

woman, and for this reason possess a pronounced appeal to sex, this appeal gaining in strength with the perfection of the charms displayed. If Christian girls and women do not feel these truths or are ignoring them, they must be told exactly what the result is and what the consequence may be. If some of the remarks made by the loafers on the street corners concerning certain girls would be repeated to them, they would doubtless be shocked, and properly so, but that they themselves are guilty of provoking such remarks, that they give offense, in fact, even to men who are trying to be pure in thoughts as well as in words and deeds, that they are therefore guilty of indecency, they must be told. The principle involved is aptly stated by Hickok, from the standpoint of general ethics: "While modesty will always be compatible with the dress which is also comfortable, fashion may often violate both; and when it does either, no purely moral person will follow it."

A paragraph must here be inserted concerning one of the cancers of the social body. For not only the familiarity which the free exposure of female charms permits to the eye is contrary to the pureness expected of the Christian, but also those personal familiarities, the contact of bodies of opposite sex which, all too often, follows the allurement of perfume, powder, paint, and exposure. For if all these factors are not intended to call attention to the user and to emphasize the sex, what is their reason for being? Strange to say, the police forces, at least the "purity squads" of many cities, have strict orders to break up spooning wherever they meet with it, while they are very neglectful of the very same duty with regard to canoe outings, buggy rides, auto rides, in the case

of all of which familiarities of person are increasingly common, and especially the modern dance. The following quotation is from a public statement made by Professor McKeever, of the University of Kansas: "The sex intoxication, brought on by the close-grip dance, and which is to-day the one great outstanding social enticement among all the young people of America — this snaky thing is new to the world. The majority of the so-called best parents are yet unaroused as to its sinister meanings for the growing generations and for the future of society. Only the specialists, the close observers who have followed the dance-hall problem through to its ultimate results, are conscious of the tremendous task of managing this modern dance among young people. For reasons of policy some of the experts have decried only the 'public dance,' but they are fully aware that the crux of the problem is not a matter of the public or private place of the 'party,' but the white-heat sex stimulation which is involved. This new twentieth century dance of death is not a matter which the individual parent can handle. The comparative few parents who are aware of the troublesome situation and are attempting to pull their young out of it, are failing in the attempt. The dancing young crowd to which the boy or girl belongs will either almost mob such objectors or blister them with public contempt, and thus they are completely whipped. Only the pulling together of the home, the school, the church, and the community at large will prove equal to the difficult task of readjustment of the sex dance." To these frank words on the "sex dance," on the "white-heat sex stimulation" we could add page after page of opinions on the modern dance, as given by pastors, social workers, heads of

reform schools, insane asylums, etc.,\* but shall confine ourselves, in order to present the matter from a new side, to some frank statements made by young women themselves, when they were asked to make some open declarations concerning their sexual life, the material being used, without mentioning names, in a psychological study. One of them writes: "In myself they (erotic dreams) occur after a dance, or any occasion where there has been unusual sexual stimulus" (Blanchard, 70). On another page of the same book we read: "One girl states that she experienced her first sensual thrill when her bosom touched that of her partner during the dance; another that her first sensation of this kind was received as she clung to her escort in an agony of terror; and many are thus awakened by the kisses and caresses of their lovers" (p. 61). Again, we find the statement in a personal account: "In the course of dances, I began to feel distinctly bodily thrills from the pressure against my breast as I was held closely in a partner's arms" (p. 78). In Document 196 of the United States Government, on "Importing Women for Immoral Purposes," the following passage occurs: "Those who recruit women for immoral purposes watch all places where young women are likely to be found under circumstances which will give them a ready means of acquaintance and intimacy, such as employment agencies, immigrant homes, *moving picture shows*, *dance-halls*, sometimes waiting-rooms in large department stores, railroad stations, manicuring and hair-dressing establishments" (Lowry, 135).

Our young people must therefore be warned, not

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\* Compare tracts by Dallmann, Stratton, Holt, and others.

only in a general manner, but with specific reference to particular dangers. The following fact must be kept in mind: The fundamental, characteristic act of every modern dance, from the waltz down to the very latest zoological monstrosity, is this, that a man embraces his partner, a woman, preferably one in the full vitality of her womanhood. This act in itself is an act of indecency, expressing a familiarity which no man has a right to assume. Even near relatives and betrothed persons keep in mind that caresses of this nature will not exceed the embrace of relational affection, and thus degenerate into dangerous dalliance. If, therefore, the one or the other indulging in any form of the modern dance says that he or she has never felt any sensual thrill and desire, it may be an abnormal case of sleeping sexuality, in which case the possible offense given to a passionate partner should be urged; or it may be a case of not understanding that the happy, giddy, nervous feeling, on account of which nine out of ten people seek the whirl and the embrace of the modern dance, is a manifestation of the sexual feeling. If young people admit the impropriety, the indecency of the embrace in the modern dance, but yield to the temptation it offers time and again, they must, of course, become special objects of care, whether on the part of parents, pastors, or older friends. And in case the admission of wrong is freely made, but the determination voiced just as freely to continue in the sinful pleasure, then the duty to proceed according to Matthew 18 is clear.

At the same time, a suggestion by Cope is very timely: "Above all we should provide directly and in the family life and our own social groups for the satisfaction of the normal desires for play and amuse-

ment. If no food is on our tables our children must still eat, and we will find them at strange tables or searching in the gutters and garbage cans. When the home cares more for chairs than for children, when it lives under the fear of furniture, the starved instincts of its young lives will drive them into pool-rooms and dance-halls, amusement-parks and carnivals. There is no solution in restriction; it lies in provision. When one looks into many homes to find them destitute of books, limited in music to tattered sheets determined only by the vogue of the street, and repellent to youth by a policy that is based on adult selfishness, it is not strange that we have an amusement problem" (*The Parent and the Child*, 58). This question will be treated from another angle in the next chapter.

A problem which often perplexes parents and sometimes also bothers educators and pastors is that of adolescent love. In the pre-pubertal stage and in early adolescence this phenomenon is known as "calf love," and requires careful handling. There is usually a stage of showing off before the object of the affections, or an equally studious ignoring, especially on the part of girls. The bashfulness of the persons affected by this form of adolescent outgrowth will be felt not only in the presence of the adored one, but also before others, especially before relatives of the object of all this fondness. Extravagant and detailed love-letters are often written, more for the satisfaction of the writer than for the purpose of forwarding the tender effusions to the beloved one. And the rhymes which are often perpetrated at this stage of the game are notable more for fervency than for the safety of their feet. The attack will usually wear off in a little

while, especially if ways and means are devised by which the object of tenderness can be shown to be just human, for the imagination of the adolescent endows the adored one with all the most excellent qualities of the fairy or of the prince. A warning is in place against ridicule, for it will either make the attack more serious, the result often being a run-away marriage, or it will take away the child's confidence in the educator guilty of such a mistake.

There may be a time of indifference to the opposite sex, especially after an experience which shows the object of tender adoration to be, after all, of the earth, earthy. Shy cameraderie will be a thing of the past, and the interest will suddenly turn toward a career or a cause. This phenomenon is usually accompanied by resentment toward the opposite sex, the girl-hater and the boy-hater being developed at this time. Sometimes the disease becomes chronic and sexuality is submerged for many years. Another fact sometimes noted in early and middle adolescence is that of juvenile love for an older person of opposite sex, though the disparity of age tends gradually to decrease. Some woman is idealized by the growing boy and attended on every possible occasion, usually also overwhelmed with gifts. The same is done by girls in the case of a favorite teacher, the attention bestowed upon him often becoming embarrassing. Mashes and crushes between members of the same sex are also found, occasionally with pronounced sexual aspect, as pointed out above, when the danger, of course, is very great.

The treatment of adolescent love requires much wisdom and tact. Stormy prohibitions are apt to produce silent stubbornness, both parties concerned

considering themselves martyrs. There is danger, as noted above, that this stubbornness will continue till the children have reached the legal age, when they promptly elope. It is far better to have the young people meet as often as possible, but always in a larger crowd, for that course wears off the edge of their keenness and very often spoils clandestine meetings. A spirit of wholesome Christian good-fellowship, together with plenty of employment in work and play, will do much toward preventing excrescences in the relation of young people toward each other. It is obvious, of course, that the entire community of the individual congregation must stand together in bringing about such conditions as will enable the young people to avoid all pitfalls. This social wisdom includes the terminating of parties at a sensible hour, insisting, at least, that regular sessions into the wee, sma' hours are not permissible. And the tact of older persons will prevent excessive pairing off at such functions.

A few words might be said, at this point, about betrothals. The method in vogue in our country, according to which young pepole arrange betrothals and marriages entirely as they choose, without consulting the parents, is emphatically against Scripture. While it is true that parents have no absolute authority over their children in the matter of giving in marriage, it remains a fact, nevertheless, that in all ordinary cases it is the parents who give their children in marriage. Without going into the matter of secret and of invalid engagements, we wish to summarize the Scriptural point of view into the following bit of advice. If a young man feels a deep and lasting affection for a young woman and both his age and his outward circumstances make it very advisable for him

to enter into the holy estate of matrimony, he should not agree with the girl first and arrange everything. Before speaking to her, even before a definite understanding is established, he ought to consult with his own parents first and get their consent. Then he may get into communication with the parents of the girl and obtain also their blessing. All preliminary matters having thus been arranged, the consent of the young woman may be obtained with a good conscience. If some sort of an obstruction looms up, nothing should be undertaken in blind zeal, but every step considered most carefully with the advice of older and more experienced friends. And so far as the young women are concerned, they may be able to save themselves and others many heart-aches if they do not throw themselves away to the first young man who happens to interest them. A promise of marriage should not be given by any Christian girl before the young man in question has consulted both with his and with her parents. Many a young woman, by insisting upon this course of procedure, as outlined so clearly in Scripture, has saved herself from an unhappy marriage and perhaps from a worse fate. It is in a young woman's favor if she is virginal both in her heart and in her actions until such a time as she may honestly step to the altar with the man of her choice, with the blessing of her parents.

There is one more point to which attention should be called in considering the problem of sex in the age of adolescence, namely that of perverted views of marriage, which are growing more common with frightful rapidity. Just what the condition of affairs is may be gathered from the fact that the physical examination of men drafted for the national army

during the recent war showed a prevalence of sex diseases which is horrible. With the freedom which is permitted in this country between the sexes, and with theaters, movies, and the dance of death all contributing to the over-stimulation of sex consciousness, it is no wonder that illegitimate intercourse is freely practiced. In the neighborhood of dance-halls, in parks, in automobiles, in buggies, and elsewhere scenes are often enacted which cause one to believe that the last barriers will soon be torn down and shamelessness parade without the least and last shred of restraint. Mechanical devices as well as medicines, more or less openly advertised and peddled from house to house, frankly intended to prevent conception, which might expose the result of the sinful cohabitation, are used, not only in the large cities, but also in the country districts. With this means for the gratification of their lust, which many young people foolishly consider the essence of marriage, at their command, many are loath to enter an honorable marriage and to be tied down, as they express it, to a single person for life. In the case of the young women, in addition to this factor, there is the other of giving up her economic independence. The obvious fact that God certainly intended women primarily for wifehood and motherhood is vehemently denied in our days. Newspapers, especially the Sunday editions, magazines and periodicals of every description, contain articles and more or less relevant discussions of the topic, and, in the majority of cases, from an extra-Biblical or an anti-Biblical viewpoint.

The problem can be met in only one way, namely by the statement of principles and truths from the Word of God, both publicly and privately. The holi-

ness of marriage, the sacredness of the marriage relationship, the fact that marriage is the normal state for the average adult, both from the social and from the hygienic standpoint, the fact that children are a gift of the Lord, the fact that the family is the fundamental unit of the nation: all these truths must be kept before the young people, in order that the virus of anti-social and anti-Biblical poison may not enter their hearts and minds, and that they by all means keep themselves pure before they enter into holy wedlock, and chaste after God has given them a spouse.

This one fact particularly must be stressed in connection with the perverted views of sex relationship and the contempt of marriage in general, namely the growing evil of childless marriages by design, or of the wilful and criminal limiting of offspring, that is, of race suicide. In all too many cases, some of the knowledge concerning the prevention of conception, which has seeped through from the channels of filth, is applied in marriage. In many cases social ambition or other selfish considerations are the motive for committing sins which are just as heinous as highway murder, for there is not even a difference of degree between snuffing out the faint flicker of life in the womb and shooting down a man in cold blood. An increasing number of women is resorting to sterility by an operation removing the ovaries or otherwise rendering motherhood impossible, and men who are in a position to know state that vasectomy, which results in artificial impotence in men, is being practised to an alarming extent.

Here only one thing can be done, and that is to state the situation in terms of Scripture. With the women of the Bible childlessness was almost the great-

est curse that could be conceived of, not only in the Old Testament, but also in the New, as numerous examples show. Moreover, in the prophets, bereavement and childlessness are expressly designated as punishments of the Lord. Without stirring up the swamp of filth which has almost reached our doors, we ought to bring out time and again the positive statements of the Lord, especially regarding the blessings which He has laid upon the state of marriage in granting to the believers a house full of children. The old saying of our fathers still holds true: Many children, many Lord's Prayers; many Lord's Prayers, many blessings. Even if we should admit that the unnatural economic conditions of our times, together with the increasing use of luxuries, have had their influence upon women in rendering them less fit to become mothers, no man has a right to set aside God's order as it has been done in the case of thousands of marriages, where people, without valid reason, have deliberately decided not to have children. We might mention, in passing, that the cold-blooded, calculating, mercenary marriages which are becoming so prevalent in our days may often be considered the reason, and the growing number of divorces the result of the evil of childless marriages.

A warning should be issued also with regard to mixed marriages, not only with such as are frankly unbelievers, infidels, and scoffers, but also with such as are members of some sectarian church. If anywhere, it should be true in marriage that man and woman should be of one heart and of one mind. Now people are largely the product of their environment, and many of the ideas learned or absorbed in childhood or early youth, particularly concerning some of

the problems just discussed, cannot be laid aside at once or even in the course of time. And when, in addition, each spouse insists upon his own religious view and when there are children, the question becomes so complicated as to make a solution almost, if not altogether, impossible. And here it is not sufficient simply to issue warnings; we must rather make it a point to encourage our young people and enable them to meet other young people of their own faith and, if possible, also with the same training. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Let each parent, in fact all whose work deals largely with young people, remember, finally, also with regard to the problem of sex in young people, that plenty of fresh air, a great deal of healthful, vigorous outdoor exercise, but not to the point of exhaustion, a large fund of objective and active interests, constructive work of all sorts, and wholesome companionships,—all these, together with the continual instruction in the Word of God, constitute the best prophylactic measures against the special evils which have been discussed above.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PROBLEM OF INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

THE chief point which must be remembered also with regard to the intellectual development of adolescents is this that the pubertal change makes the average child a wholly different being, physically, mentally, morally. It stands to reason that normal maturity, with the attaining of the adult age, is most favorable to intellectual development. For this reason, certain manifestations and situations are partly interesting and partly alarming to parents, teachers, and pastors. The period has been found one of heavy elimination from attendance at schools, a fact which is causing a great deal of apprehension, and rightly so, in certain circles. It is a period which demands almost ideal growth conditions, in order that every single adolescent may reach the proper maturity. It has been found that the influence of social factors is very decided in controlling the intellectual development, that many a young person, in fact, is mentally stunted on account of social over-stimulation. Moreover, retardation physically is accompanied by the same phenomenon mentally. All these and other factors, touched upon in the present chapter, make the problem of intellectual development in young people both unusually interesting and difficult.

So far as the physical and mental phenomena and characteristics of the adolescent age are concerned, some facts stand out with particular clearness. Puberty is, first of all, the real birthday of the imagin-

ation, of that imagination which may be of great value in adult life. "Adolescence, in either sex, is a period of intense mental activity, and contains almost unlimited possibilities for the development of the higher intellectual and emotional processes" (Blanchard, 130). For the first time in life, there is a real understanding for the miracles and beauties of the universe, together with an intense desire to penetrate into the secrets of nature or to delve into the knowledge of the ages. In every direction there are wonderful vistas of possibilities, many of which beckon the adolescent on. All this is present, as it were, in a germ, and only awaits development. The normal young person whose intellect has not yet become stagnant with the fumes from the cess-pool of false and foul sex knowledge which take away all intelligent ambition, no longer has the patience to submit to the routine learning of childhood, to the study by rote, to the monotony of dead drill which is still laid upon all too many pupils of grammar-school age. But the trouble is that this expansion of the mentality does not follow systematic lines; the ideas and thoughts are rather fond of going on a rampage, of losing all semblance to quiet endeavor directed toward a goal.

To this must be added another fact. The adolescent, after the awakening of the sex life, is, in most cases, not less able mentally, but less willing; the idea of real, hard mental work does not appeal to him. There are so many distractions which seem so alluring to youth that real effort along the highway leading to enduring knowledge seems a bane upon existence. Then there is, to the growing boy, the irksome intelligence of the apparent superiority of girls of the same chronological age with himself. Instead of let-

ting this fact spur him on to greater and more persistent endeavor, the average adolescent boy will permit it to discourage him. In many cases, the result is a few years of stagnation or a turning of the intellect into channels which are continually overflowing with muddy waters hostile to church and society. If the home and the school, and, in a manner of speaking, the church, do not keep the growing boy busy with useful intellectual pursuits, then the chances are that he will turn into a tough, or a loafer, or a degenerate, sometimes to all three at the same time.

To this we must add still another characteristic, namely that of opposition to dogmatism, which shows itself in an apparent unconcern, in a studied, callous indifference, masquerading as a supine contempt for transmitted knowledge, or in objections to everything offered in the line of teaching. The mind of the boy or girl may be aquiver with eagerness to know, but this eagerness must be veiled in the manner indicated. What the adolescent has not experienced, investigated, discovered for himself, is under suspicion from the very beginning. But, at the same time, since youth in either sex is a dreamer and often lives in the midst of romance, he will accept the most florid flights of a disordered imagination as gospel truth. Hence the persistence of the dime-novel craze in the early years of adolescence. So vivid will the scenes, as brought up by a frantic imagination, often become that they are interwoven with the waking thoughts and acts of many a boy and girl and may produce many very unpleasant situations, which may often even bring the young people and their mental malady into the province of pathology. Cases are on record in which boys and girls of that age fastened some story which they

read to a certain person of their acquaintance with such persistence as to make an investigation into their sanity necessary.

This last fact is the most serious from the standpoint of adults having charge of young people, no matter in what capacity. The *Flegeljahre* of boys, the *Backfisch*-age of girls, with their fanatical, romanticizing superlativeness and over-tension are dangerous, in a way. The pertness, the self-conceit, the caprice of young people are merely symptoms indicating the disturbed condition of their mental life, and should therefore not be regarded for themselves, but always in their relation to the developing intellectual life, which will, of course, make the attitude of the older person dealing with adolescents entirely different than if they happen to be brought face to face with outright wickedness. For so great is the disturbance within the intellect during these years that psychoses and neuroses abound. The emotional strain may often become so great as to be accompanied by morbid impulses. Almost invariably there is a great waste of energy in whatever work is undertaken, followed by periods which show a decided propensity toward melancholia. That all these moods affect the mental status and the intellectual achievement of adolescents is a matter of common knowledge, or should be, although the knowledge is often not acted upon by parents, teachers, and pastors.

These tendencies, moreover, are not without certain dangers, not only to the intellectual, but also to the moral life. There is, for instance, the phenomenon of pathological lying due to the over-development of the day-dreaming or romanticizing tendency. This peculiarity may reach a stage in which it is practically

impossible for the adolescent to distinguish between fact and fancy. In some cases, also, neurasthenic conditions have been found due to the witnessing of loathsome sights, including that of passionate illegitimate intercourse, the explanation being that the attempted repression of the sexual impulses following such an experience almost invariably works harm by causing the mind to dwell upon the exhibition with a morbid delineation of detail which has an unfavorable reaction upon the intellect. To this morbidness may be added a strange hyper-consciousness, which finds a reproof in every question and wears itself out in trying to reach a stage of perfection absolutely beyond criticism. To a youth with an oversensitive conscience every detail is magnified to the dimensions of the entire matter in hand. Unfortunately, this pride of appearance and this striving after ideals of absolute perfection is often associated with an irritability of temper and an overassertion of individuality with tend to exclude the unhappy victim from ordinary human society. The natural conclusion drawn by the sufferer at such a time is, of course, this that no one in the house or in the entire circle of friends and acquaintances understands him and that he must go elsewhere, perhaps even leave home entirely, in order to be appreciated.

It is then that the adolescent spirit of adventure may become dangerous. The unrest is already there, in the heart, in the mind. Youth is busy reconstructing life, the world. If the growing boy's and girl's needs are overlooked at home, in the school, in the church, causing the idea to become fixed in the young mind that his or her special problems are not understood, then the lure of the unknown may become

strong enough to cause a severing of the bonds of childhood. The immediate circle of relatives and friends is humdrum and dull: romantic, exciting experiences are elsewhere, in strange cities, in the glow of the white lights near the theaters and dance-halls. And so the craving for excitement leads the poor moth away from the protection of home to seek the light, the flame of life. All too often the young wings are cruelly singed and disillusionment comes too late. The presence of the many hard, calculating faces on the thoroughfares of our large cities tells a story of its own.

Along these lines, then, are found the dangers which must be guarded against by parents, teachers, and workers among young people; these are some of the manifestations of the youthful spirit as it strives for a wider field for the expansion of its intellect. This must be emphasized all the more, since youth is the age of folly, often of marked silliness, which is unable to see the serious side of matters. "College songs, the absurdities of cork minstrelsy, the infantilism of Mother Goose, the eccentricities of enfeebled intelligence, so strongly entrenched on the variety stage, with its exaggerated oddities, freakishness, and idiocies, foolish and funny acting, with every kind of grimace, have frequent illustrations in the lives of normal youth, with whom all this is spontaneous and intentional" (Hall, I, 317).

This is the one extreme, when adolescents lose themselves in the mazes of silliness and are unable to find their way back to normal sanity. But there is the other extreme as well, namely that young people, urged on by their desire to penetrate into the unknown on every side, ignore the limitations placed upon the

average person by the demands of a rational hygiene. The mind of maturing youth, being in unstable equilibrium, may be overtaxed, if the difference between intellectual capacity and actual mental work required is not observed. Nevertheless, vigorous school-work may be done if only the life outside of school-hours is wisely ordered, a matter which is largely in the hands of the parents. There should, of course, not be too much and late studying, though it must be admitted that the present tendency is toward the opposite extreme. It is self-evident, also, that the complexities of modern life must not be permitted to sap the strength which is intended for the brain of the growing child. Endless parties, receptions which ape the elaborate functions of the elders, indulgence in social matters beyond a quiet and healthy stimulation,—these factors must be regulated with great care, lest they interfere with the mental development of young people.

It is for this reason that we insert a plea for the old-fashioned home, for the revival of family life, of the family circle. We must get away from the tendency to make the home a boarding-house in which the members of the family meet at the dinner-table and where they have their sleeping-quarters. The competition of outside attractions must be met in such a way as to cause the members of the family to spend their time together. "It is high time to claim the rights of the home. It is a social institution. It has rights at least equal to the school. But society has shown a tendency to regard it as negligible and the schools have often ruthlessly disregarded its rights. . . . The problem is twofold: to make the life in the family so rich and attractive that it will have

greater holding power than all outside, and, at the same time, to develop in children tastes and appetites for the better life that the family has to offer as compared with the designed attractions of the street and of commercial amusement. We may as well save breath spent in lamenting the indifference of children and begin to make the family life so different from other life that they will feel they cannot afford to be long absent from it" (Cope, 47. 48). The home must minister to the instinctive needs of the children, those of play and activity, by furnishing games and other pastimes; and the parents must cultivate the needs of the children which they do not instinctively feel by arousing their appetites and cultivating their tastes for good music, wholesome reading, instructive pictures, and the quietness and joys of sharing life together. And last, but not least, friends make a home, for which reason the children must be encouraged to cultivate the right kind of friendships, even if things are sometimes cluttered up and the furniture is moved out of place.

But to proceed. So far as the duties of parents, teachers, pastors and all leaders of young people's work with reference to the intellectual development of the young people in their charge are concerned, there are, first of all, a few general points which should be kept in mind at all times. The silliness of young people of both sexes must be taken into account as a matter of course. The proper treatment is, not to suppress the manifestation outright, but to curb, bridle, and direct it in such a manner as to hinder excesses. Giggling and laughing to excess about nothing in particular may be controlled so as to grow into constant cheerfulness in later years, into the ability

to see the bright side of matters, without being blind to the fact that there is also a dark side, and this must sometimes be taken into account. — Another tendency which must be curbed is that of scattering energy in countless directions. Young people must be taught to make up their minds definitely concerning the studies they want to take up, the line of work which they intend making their life's business, or any other subjects in which they might become interested themselves or through tactful suggestions from leaders, and then to concentrate all their efforts upon the mastery of the subject or subjects which they have chosen. Every new division of their studies, every new phase of their work, must be tackled in the same way, lest they fritter away time and ability and their minds become increasingly shallow as the years go by.

For this reason the modern newspaper, especially the Sunday edition, aside from the fact that its tendency is often anything but morally elevating, is a menace, for the average newspaper-reader almost invariably ruins his mind for study which requires deep concentration, since too many impressions along widely divergent lines are recorded. Of the ruin of both morality and intellect by the modern newspaper we read: "While there are a few exceptions, apparently a decreasing number, it is evident that the average morning paper is not prepared for children, nor is it designed for persons of refined tastes. It may be described as cheap, coarse, and nasty, specializing in crime, lust, and scandal, and usually dependable only to the extent of following some policy of its management . . . garbage-can material treated in alley-scavenger taste, the type of news that once was confined to a few notorious sheets. . . . We know it

is usually corrupting; we know it distorts life and that to judge humanity through it is worse than studying sociology in a slum or estimating a city by its criminal courts or its appearance from the railroad.

. . . We cannot yet get real news in the present-day papers save as it floats, here and there, an island of important fact in an ocean of silly gossip, wave after wave of weak-minded fads and the drifting scum that a beer-hall taste calls 'human interest.' If the American newspaper, save for a few notable exceptions, really reflects American interests and taste, then, God help us all!" (Cope, 61. 63.) To give the average newspaper into the hands of children and young people before their character is pretty solidly formed is almost criminal; it is, in fact, dangerous food even for the adult if he expects intellectual stimulation and moral uplifting from it. A sane person does not roll around in the filth at the sewer's mouth to find out whether it has an evil smell, nor does he take doses of strychnine every day in order to see whether the poison will kill him. Until such a time as the newspapers will have sense enough at least to separate clean history and reliable political information from the criminal page, adopting the policy of a special page for all the filth and muck which they feel they must feed the public, and until such a time as they replace the inane and often dangerous and criminal "funnies" and the suggestive "art pages" with decent stuff, the Christian citizen will manage to worry along very well without them. There are weekly and monthly periodicals in sufficient numbers in America, which offer a good digest of the news, while they do not dish up the nauseating details of the latest murder and divorce trials.

In trying to counteract the pernicious influence of the newspaper, educators should help the intellectual development of their pupils by teaching them, above all, how to study. This is done in two directions. In hearing a lecture, or sermon, or discussion, young people must be taught to follow so closely as to be able to reproduce the outline of the lecture or talk correctly, even in the matter of details. This takes concentration and application, of course, but it is worth the effort. In the second place, the reading of periodicals and books must be done with far more deliberate effort at mastering the contents. In many cases, students will not be able to do more than to stop at the end of every paragraph, page, or chapter, and recall the main thoughts of the section. Still better is the method of writing down the thoughts as thus reproduced and comparing them with the author's statements. Another excellent method is that of reading always with a pencil or pen in hand, not only for the purpose of making marginal notations, which will afterwards serve as guide-posts, but also for the purpose of putting down the gist of paragraphs or chapters in special note-books, and thus to have a summary of the books studied in the course of the years. It does not make any difference whether this is in the field of literature, or art in any of its branches, or science, or philosophy, or the trades or professions in any of their phases: the method always applies. These note-books, properly indexed, will be found invaluable for purposes of reference at all times. It will, in most cases, change the average person from a spouter of editorials to an independent thinker.

This is the next point which should be kept in mind in training young people, the necessity of having

them learn to think for themselves, with only a few general directions to guide them. The danger is that the average adolescent will follow the line of least resistance and become a mere repeater of editorials instead of forming a real ability, based upon sound knowledge, also of the fundamental Biblical maxims, of judging matters for himself. It is in this department that constant watchfulness on the part of leaders in young people's work is needed, whether the work which is being done is along broadly educational lines in young people's societies or in the more circumscribed field of Bible study. Proper guidance of intellectual development must take into account this need of training the judgment in such a direction as to make it reliable afterward in all questions pertaining to church work. In this connection it may be mentioned that there is no surer way of stimulating the efforts of young people, particularly in church organizations, than by making them feel that you need their help. It is necessary that responsibility gradually be placed upon their shoulders, under proper supervision, of course, especially in the beginning, but later with greater latitude and trust.

It may also be noted, in this connection, with reference to organized work in young people's societies under the auspices of the congregation, that "there is no surer way to protect the adolescent from temptation than to draw the waves of sexual emotion into those channels which have proven to be satisfactory substitutes for the procreative act" (Blanchard, 133). The young people, if at all of the right caliber, are anxious to produce something, even if they do not put it to themselves in that way. The very expression: "There's nothing doing there," shows the trend of

their thoughts. The work in young people's societies, therefore, must not be a haphazard affair, it must not be undertaken at random. It must rather be planned and carried out most carefully and systematically, and above all in such a manner as to give *all* the members an outlet for their energies. If a small clique forms or, what is worse, several cliques, then the work is hindered very materially. And a good manager is not one who does *all* the work himself, but who can organize his forces according to their several abilities. Generalship is needed in young people's work as nowhere else in church organizations, but the results are worth our while. It is not essential, but it certainly is most advisable that the young people have their own room or rooms in the parish house or the school or the basement of the church. Not only should they have an opportunity to play clean, wholesome games of every kind, but a manual training room or an industrial room where they may keep their tools and do the work in which they are interested, under the direction of a competent mechanic, might well be provided. Above all, there should be a good reading room and library, in charge of some able older person, with a sufficient amount of sound and decent literature to satisfy all ordinary demands, especially in small towns and rural districts. The best trade journals and woman's magazines should be provided. Let it not appear like play, but enlist the serious cooperation of all those having stock in the enterprise, for we assume, as a matter of fact, that it will be run on this plan. All these activities, of course, will be in charge of the young people themselves, with separate evenings for the juniors, under a form of self-government approved and supervised by the congregation. All this may

sound chimerical, but it has been tried out successfully in a number of cities and is, at any rate, worth investigating thoroughly.

It is self-evident that the educational activities of all young people's societies should be planned and carried out in a systematic manner, not in the haphazard fashion which is still so generally in vogue. The usual way seems to be that the leaders of young people rely upon chance in directing their work. Somebody will suggest an entertainment or a lecture or a debate, and the matter is acted upon on the spur of the moment, without any relation to the rest of the activities in other societies or in the congregation. Such a course is almost bound to fail. Let us rather have the work of every season planned most carefully in advance. The date for the annual entertainment or for the annual concert should be set before the autumn work commences. The work of every educational evening should be as carefully mapped out as any chautauqua circuit program. Lectures or topics for study should be announced in advance, if possible, on printed slips. One certain subject should be taken up in any one season, either from history, or literature, or art, or nature study, or geography, or any other of the countless interesting fields which are open. Many of these may be illustrated with stéréopticon views. And not only that, but since the vast majority of movie show pictures are of a nature that a consistent Christian will not be able to patronize them, societies everywhere might consider the purchasing of small moving picture machines of their own and then show such reels as are not only clean, but instructive and educational. The initial outlay is small and can easily be made up by charging a nominal admission fee.

A few paragraphs may be added, finally, concerning actual school work during the age of adolescence, since parents and pastors are more or less directly interested in this question. So far as the selection of subjects is concerned, the need of the individual and the object in view will, of course, decide the choice, especially where the elective system is still broadly used. The advantages of utilitarian, disciplinary, and cultural values must carefully be compared. The impetus given to the so-called practical studies in high-schools and colleges by the materialistic considerations of many educators has almost spent itself, and a reaction more favorable to cultural subjects has set in. The final outcome will probably be that the humanities will once more be recognized, but that the overemphasis on analytic work will be discontinued.

So far as the form of schoolwork during the age of adolescence is concerned, the socialized recitation, as conducted by men and women who thoroughly understand its working and are able and willing to undertake the added tasks it usually imposes in the way of nervous strain, offers the solution of the most difficult problems which have perplexed educators in the past. It is an easy matter, indeed, to get up before a class and spout wisdom, especially if this is fed from only a narrow channel and if one employs the methods of a martinet in preserving order, but that method does not get the students to work. The aim of the socialized recitation is to arouse a spontaneous interest in the subject treated in the minds of the pupils by bringing it into relation with their lives, or by presenting it as a problem which they themselves will find pleasure in solving, largely by being thrown on

their own individual and social resources. The teacher, in that case, is there chiefly to direct the efforts of the individuals or the groups making up the classes, to serve as arbiter, and to supply information or the guide to information when appealed to and when the circumstances seem to require it. "At adolescence . . . there should be a radical change in the whole educational program. The time for drill is over now; the soul of youth is essentially active and possesses a craving for excitement which will not be denied, but finds satisfaction in devious ways when home and school are not wise enough to meet its needs. The imagination runs riot, too, and must be guided in its creative channels, lest it waste its energies in delusion and dream. Here, artistic talents and the study of literature play an important role" (Blanchard, 134). "It is far more important to universalize the sympathies of a child by bringing him into personal relations with characters in books and plays than it is to have him know that such or such a verse is written in iambic tetrameter. . . . The instinct of youth for beauty and vividness of expression, boyhood's and girlhood's intuitive feeling that behind the message a human soul exists, and youth's desire to reincarnate the soul through the message, all furnish us with our best guides on the pathway of literary instruction. . . . It is this humanistic element which must pervade the entire high-school curriculum. The girl must no longer be molded into the rigid school system, but the educational plan itself must become plastic, and easily adaptable to the fundamental nature of adolescence with its ever-varying needs. We have spent much valuable time and energy in our . . . acclamation of culture; let us utilize all this emotion

in the remodeling of our secondary schools in accordance with the ideals thus loudly proclaimed. — In connection with our technical laboratory work in physics or chemistry, the student must be infused with a sympathy and admiration for the keen minds and unique personalities which are connected with the development of these sciences. . . . In the translations of language not the grammatical accuracy, but the spirit of the author and his characters should be the chief end and aim, while even mathematics might be somewhat illuminated by little diversions into the biographies of those who first formulated its principles" (L. c., 135. 136). In other words, education during the adolescent age must take into account the fact that the young people are human beings, individuals in the social body, not pieces of machines made after the same pattern.

In concluding this section, attention might once more be called to the suggestion made once before (*Psychology and the Christian Day-school*, 114), that there ought to be segregation of the sexes from the seventh or eighth to the tenth or eleventh grade, inclusive, either by organizing sections in the same class, or by having special schools. To this may be added another point, namely that pupils of the same sex age, that is, of the same psysiological age, should be kept together, regardless of their chronological age, that is, regardless of the number of years they are credited with according to their birth certificate.

## CHAPTER V

### THE PROBLEM OF RELIGIOUS STORM AND STRESS

IT IS a strange paradox that the very age which has been found most favorable for the reception of religious impressions, as many recent investigators have shown, is at the same time the period of life during which many young people throw aside all the bands which savor of religious influence and drift away from church, never to return. The very same psychological conditions which produce the attitude of hyper-consciousness and of inquiry that we take advantage of in calling the attention of the adolescent to the truth of the divine Word (just as we make use of similar conditions in adult life when an unbeliever has been subjected to severe afflictions), these same conditions may drive the young man or the young woman into the opposite direction and cause the young people to join the great infidels or to become sectarians of the hopeless sort, outside of the pale of Christianity. It follows, therefore, that the present chapter is the most important not only from the standpoint of the pastor, but from that of every worker among young people as well.

We note, first of all, that certain vices and crimes are particularly characteristic of the adolescent age. Under the incentive of a false ambition in these years *selfishness* may be established for life. Its most loathsome form is that produced by the undemocratic and antisocial observance of social distinction, which regards every advance of a fellow-mortal as a personal

insult. This selfish snobbery is becoming so prevalent in our country, even in church circles, that it threatens to hinder the influence and the spread of the Gospel very decidedly, especially in mission work. The tendency toward truancy is also very marked throughout the age of adolescence. Most of the itinerant vagabonds, vagrants, gadabouts, hoboies, and tramps are developed at this time of life. The idea of constant strenuous application to either study or work does not appeal to youth. Add to this the lure of the unknown referred to in a former chapter, the craving for excitement, which is so strongly developed in certain young people, and the conditions which produce tramps and bums of either sex are present. In many cases, furthermore, we have a morbid anger to deal with, which is all the more difficult to handle since the factor of oversensitiveness tends to make matters worse. Then there is *envy*, the ill-will because of the superior success of any one else, and *jealousy*, the apprehensive suspicion of being outdone, especially by a rival, in matters of the affection and favor. Jealousy in love affairs is particularly dangerous during early and middle adolescence, since it is so apt to go to extremes very rapidly, to precipitate crises in just a little while, as many a coquette has found out to her sorrow. *Theft* is also found very often in these years, and with peculiar persistence, so that the habit, if once established, seems hard to break. Most cases of incendiарism have also been traced to adolescents, their love of excitement causing them to try what effect a little fire will have. Then there is, of course, the ancient and terrible evil of *prostitution*, with its brief and violent delights of passion, and its long and serious aftermath, when the transgressors on both sides must

pay. There is the loathsome crime of rape, as committed against any woman above the age of ten against her will and against a woman-child under the age of ten with or against her will. This crime is far more prevalent than people have generally supposed, the disclosures in certain sections of our country having caused cries of horror on every hand. This crime is confined almost entirely to adolescents and to degenerates. There is, lastly, the peculiar suicide mania among young people, which has grown with alarming rapidity in civilized countries, due chiefly to the unnatural conditions of living which obtain in most cities. The motives given by the criminals themselves may usually be included under the feeling that they are misunderstood in the world, even by their nearest relatives and friends, or they allege disappointment in love, or the inability to overcome some obstruction in the way of ambitious desire. And, lest we forget, the mania for using the name of the Lord in vain, the special curse of America, must not be overlooked in a catalog of this kind.

To these outright vices and crimes must be added certain other dangers, which may, in themselves, counteract any positive religious influence, unless removed in time. There is the danger of deliberately cultivating a low moral standard, without actually becoming guilty of gross crimes or vices. It has been found time and again that the insincerity, the lack of truthfulness, and the maliciousness of this age have been carried over into adult life. The vacillating and prevaricating tendency of adolescence also cling to the adult, if not put away in time, in most cases to the end of life. This is true also of habits of indecent and profane language, as many a person has found

out to his sorrow. It is also in this domain that the sower of wind will have a harvest of storm, for the habit grows with the years, and can be eradicated only by definite and energetic measures. A similar danger is that of acquiring a low doctrinal and ethical standard. It is this fact that makes the menace of anti-christian and unionistic societies of every kind (the many lodges and lodge-like organizations of our country, the Y. W. C. A., the Y. M. C. A., the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, etc.), apart from the intrinsic positive, often blasphemous doctrines which some of these associations hold, so great. Every movement inside or outside the Church which tends to deaden the consciousness of the sensitiveness toward doctrinal differences, is bound to react unfavorably upon a person's attitude toward the Bible as the Word of God. To the average American outside of our own circles, of course, our viewpoint on unionism is about as intelligible as a philosophical treatise in Sanscrit, chiefly because so many of our fellow-citizens are not sufficiently grounded in the Bible truths. But it is for that very reason that our young people are in danger of being drawn into a way of thinking which is continually represented to them as the American way of looking at things. The difference between true Americanism, loyalty of the right brand, and the spurious variety which crops out from time to time when people become bigoted, is all too little appreciated in the country at large.

This problem is rendered still more difficult by the critical attitude, by the tendency to doubt, by the impulse of self-assertion, which are peculiar to the period of adolescence. Careful investigations have shown that the doubts of young people concerning the

truths of the Bible, if once started, progress in about the following line. The miracles are surrendered first, then the morality of some of the Old Testament heroes, then the idea of Jehovah, then the goodness of God in permitting suffering, then the efficacy of prayer, then the coming of the Day of Judgment, then the doctrine of the Trinity, then that of the resurrection, then the virgin birth of Christ, then immortality. The skepticism of many young people is made worse, moreover, by their work in high-schools, colleges, and universities, where unbelieving teachers, usually of the second-rate variety in whom a little learning is a dangerous thing, take advantage of every opportunity, directly and indirectly, to undermine the faith of their pupils in the truths of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, the method of procedure most favored being that of ridicule. The ubiquitous theory of evolution, which is, strictly speaking, nothing but a hypothesis to this day, and has definitely been shown to be illogical, unreasonable, and inadequate,\* is still working the most harm, chiefly because it is simply taken for granted by a great many teachers in secondary schools and colleges and has crept into a large number of text-books, just as though it were an established fact. The following lines were written by a young lady, who grew up in one of our congregations and attended one of our schools, later, however, going to high-school and university, where the instruction she received resulted in her becoming doubtful of the very fundamentals of Christian truth.

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\* Read Prof. Graebner's little book on Evolution.

"Who am I? Whence came I? Go whither?  
Why am I here?  
If ye, O ye learned, have the key to all wisdom,  
Why offer ye  
No hope for the future, naught but life as we live it  
Now and here?  
Why strive for the highest, the noblest ideals,  
Only to know  
That the struggle is vain, and the end of all being,  
The reward of the pain,  
That this world full of trouble and sorrow and misery  
Leads to nothing beyond?  
If the end of life is the end of existence,  
Why keep up the fight?  
Why not leave all the woe, all the anguish and sorrow,  
And hasten the end?  
Why live if the struggle, the strife and affliction,  
Lead to nothing at all?"

That is pessimism of a terrible kind, futureless and hopeless. But the experience of this girl is not exceptional by any means. The reports are coming in from all sides that our young people who attend high-school and college, even theological students who are going to universities, have lost their childhood faith and are drifting, like a rudderless ship, toward the rocks of atheism and open blasphemy.

Strange to say, another phenomenon of the adolescent age coming under this category is of a nature almost opposite to that discussed in the last paragraphs. It is a feature which may account for the entrance of many a young woman into the cloister. By a strange reaction, some young people show a peculiar disgust with themselves and therefore take an almost morbid interest in the Bible, studying it, however, with an avidity which is far from healthy, as a sort of penance. In some cases, the conscience of an

adolescent dreamer was found so burdened with severe self-condemnation as to make them resort to the Bible with the purpose of expiating a real or supposed guilt, without, however, seeking the truth of the redemption in Christ; in some instances, in fact, those parts of the Bible were avoided which treated of the atonement. Cases of this kind offer a very serious problem, especially since the afflicted persons are, as a rule, very reticent about the specific trouble which is bothering them.

There are still other dangers which beset the path of the adolescent, although older people are not exempt. There is the appeal, the lure of the modern so-called social Christianity, whose exponents are denying the fundamental truths of the Bible and preaching instead a selfish morality with a veneer of religion. There is the field of classical antiquity with its dangers for the linguist and the archeologist, the danger being very great also in our higher schools. There is the fashionable discrediting of the Bible as being out-of-date. The well-known British author, H. G. Wells, in a series of articles on "The Socializing of Civilization" in a well-known periodical, has a paper also on "The Bible of Civilization," in which he proposes the compilation of a new Bible from the literature of the world, along the lines suggested by Eliot's "Five-foot Shelf," of which he says: "I would picture to you this modern Bible, perhaps two or three times as bulky as the old Bible, and consisting first of: the Historical Books, with maps and the like: the Books of Conduct and Wisdom; the Anthologies of Poetry and Literature; and, finally, the Book of Forecasts. I would picture this Bible to you as most carefully done and printed, and made accessible to all, the basis of education in

every school, the common platform of all discussion, just as in the past the old Bible used to be. I would ask you to imagine it translated into every language, a common material of understanding throughout all the world." This is drivel, of course, and blasphemy as well. Fortunately the author did not have the temerity to say that his conglomeration would make men wise unto salvation by faith which is in Christ Jesus.

The treatment of the various dangers and disorders briefly discussed in the last paragraphs will vary with the symptoms and with the intensity of the attack. So far as the vices and crimes mentioned above are concerned, the instruction of school and catechumen class must be reenforced and deepened by concrete exposition and concrete warnings as occasion offers. It is necessary, of course, that the parents be staunch allies of the pastor, especially with regard to the sins of immorality, concerning which public information is often not advisable, except when the sexes are addressed separately, as suggested in Chapter III. All these vices are so plainly condemned in Scripture that passages may freely be adduced and the practical application made. The dangers of low moral standards and of unionistic practises and tendencies offer more difficulties, because they are not generally recognized as evils in our country. The matter must be taken up, not in the form of a general or blanket condemnation, but in discussions, in sermons, lectures, and talks, in which specific points must be brought out and the evidence clearly adduced from the Bible. The form of study concerning questions of this nature which brings all the young people together and gives every one some particular point to work up

in reports before the whole body is to be recommended very highly. For we must keep in mind here, as we did concerning the other problems: "In most instances, it is the nature of the environmental stimuli that determines whether the conversion of sexual energy shall be upward or downward" (Blanchard, 146).

As for the critical attitude so natural to young people, and the doubt, disbelief, superstition, and other manifestations which tend to result from this attitude, the fact cannot be reiterated often enough that doctrinal, expository sermons have always been and will always be the chief instruments to undo the influence of the Evil One. If we will but let the Bible speak for itself, then the power of the Spirit in the Word may be depended upon to do the rest, Is. 55, 10. 11. With this foundation well established, the work in apologetics also will be rendered much easier, for then the proof is comparatively simple "that human reason invariably becomes unreasonable, when it presumes to gainsay the divine revelation in the Word." We are assuming, as a matter of course, that home devotion is still practised in our circles, for it affords one of the most excellent opportunities for sound discussion of the great truths of life. Also, the Bible reading of the individual must be done in a systematic manner, and the young people must be taught some system of study, as when the 1191 chapters of the Bible are so divided that three chapters are read on every week-day and five on every Sunday, reading Psalm 119 in eight sections. In that way the Bible may be read through once every year, with only ten to fifteen minutes devoted to this study every day, surely not too much to ask for the sake of Him who bade us "search the Scriptures," that is, to ransack them.

Let us not overlook one fact, also with regard to the religious instruction of our confirmed youth, whether this be done in sermons, lectures, discussions, Bible classes also for adults (how badly we need them!), or by talks with the individuals in pastoral work, namely that all work should be done in a systematic, well-planned way, without any haphazard features, and that it must invariably be constructive. An educator or pastor who hopes to train in the truth by means of prohibitions alone will find himself sadly disappointed. Every part of the work with young people should be planned with a definite object in view and then engineered with the greatest care, down to the very last detail, whether the pastor or any other officer of the congregation or of the young people's society works out the entire scheme himself, or merely supervises the plan. Some pastors have found special sermons for young people at definite intervals productive of much good, since they give them the feeling of being a part of the congregation and cause them to take an active interest in the work. The habit of some pastors to discuss all important resolutions of the congregation and of Synod with their young people has had excellent results. The same is true of reunions. These services should, above all, be planned most carefully and engineered with close attention to detail. Such matters as sending cards or letters of invitation to all the young people, of having them assemble in the school or in the basement of the church and then march in a body to the church auditorium, of having them sit by classes, and the like, are, of course, entirely secondary considerations, but the argument in their favor is this that they will arouse anticipatory interest and thus pave the way for the

success of the service, so far as this may be legitimately done by human schemes and devices. With such a setting, the sermon, as the climax of the service, will probably be delivered with greater effect than without preparatory planning.

And last, but by no means least: The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man, of every believer, availeth much. If we place the problems of our young people before the Lord in daily prayer and intercession, we may be sure of the Lord's assistance.

**SOLI DEO GLORIA!**







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